

HOME SERVICE;

OR

SCENES AND CHARACTERS FROM LIFE,

AT

OUT AND HEAD QUARTERS.

BY

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AUTHOR OF "RECOLLECTIONS OF AN ARTILLERY OFFICER "

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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HOME SERVICE.

CHAPTER I.

I ENTITLE MYSELF TO DISTANCE OLD FRIENDS—YATES FINDS A RIVAL — SOULS THAT MIGHT LIE IN NUTSHELLS — HARMONY ENFORCED—SIMS' WINNING WAYS — ADVICE GRATIS—PIE-CRUST PROMISES — MILITARY AND NAVAL HISTORIANS—A LAME ANECDOTE.

I HAD taken my seat one evening in the upper boxes of Covent Garden Theatre, and was unexpectedly joined by an old Dauphine Island and Royal Oak friend,* Captain Haymes of the Navy; he, with good-humoured face, warm manner, and extended hand, made towards me, whilst I received his friendly greetings with a coolness and distance which I could not fail to perceive somewhat astonished him.

Between the acts he again essayed to draw me into conversation, but I remained coldly courteous; at length I perceived that his attention was attracted to the interior of my hat, where a

* Vide Recollections of an Artillery Officer, vol. ii. page 62.

seal, having a coat of many quarterings, supporters, and a coronet, met his astonished eyes.

“Hollo!” cried the kind-hearted sailor, “what’s all this?”

“All what, my good sir? simply the impression of a seal to distinguish my hat. I see nothing very wonderful in it.”

“But, my dear Benson, here’s an earl’s coronet.”

“True, sir, there is; I presume when a man succeeds to that dignity, he has a right to use the due mark of his rank—I perceive you are not aware that since we last met——”

“My dear Lord,” quickly interrupted Haymes, “’pon my soul I did not know it, and I hope my freedom has not offended you: you see *I* am just the same blunt fellow as ever, though I must say you are most da—— materially altered. Your Lordship was once——but, however, no matter!”

The dear credulous creature had swallowed the bait so much to my wish, that, to carry on the joke, I condescended to treat him with a somewhat more familiar manner, and, in the course of conversation, threw out a patronizing hint of my readiness to forward his views by my interest with the First Lord of the Admiralty, though, as I live, had he asked me the name of that personage, I could not have told him.

At the conclusion of the comedy, Haymes expressed a desire to be made known to Yates, being an ardent admirer of his versatile talents.

“Yates,” said I, “is a friend of mine. I’ll introduce you to him this evening.”

Haymes looked as doubtingly as if what I said was in reality a great man’s promise. However, I kept my word, as I shall now relate.

“The Manager in Distress” was then playing with immense success; the united talents of Mrs. Davenport, Connor, and Yates, rendering it highly popular and attractive. It had been arranged between Yates and myself, that on this particular evening I was to relinquish the seat I occupied to him, when he required it; at the proper moment he entered the box, and I, without any observation, took my seat behind the Captain. A glance was sufficient to apprize Yates that I did not wish him to recognize me for the moment.

Haymes, unconscious of his neighbour’s identity, was paying great attention to the business of the scene, when, to his surprise, the new comer rose, and began to address the house; the unsuspecting sailor, horrified at such an unusual proceeding, laid hold of him by the arm, and earnestly requested him to be seated; many persons in the adjoining boxes, equally annoyed at such an interruption to the performance, expressed their ap-

probation of Haymes's conduct, and cheered him on with cries of "Turn him out!" "Shame!" "Send for the officer!" Thus encouraged, Haymes rather warmly accosted the supposed aggressor:

"You see, sir, you are disturbing the company — Sit down, I beg of you."

Yates still kept his feet, and enjoyed the consternation of this stickler for Heaven's first law.

"I ask you to sit down; and if you don't chuse to do so quietly, I must make you."

Yates shouted at the earnestness of his Mentor.

"I'm not to be laughed at, sir; and since you won't do what's right by gentle means, — my eyes, if I don't put you on your beam-ends in a twinkling:" saying which, he laid violent hands upon the Comedian, and would have forced him down, had I not come to the rescue by whispering —

"Let him alone; 'tis part of the performance; 'tis Yates."

Haymes stared with all his eyes, let go the collar of his unoffending antagonist's coat, and resumed his seat, covered with consternation, at having attracted in his own person so much of public attention. But he speedily recovered himself, and relished to the full the novelty of the entertainment.

Before Yates left the box, I introduced him to

Haymes, and could not but enjoy the perplexity into which he was thrown ; on hearing the Captain speak of me so deferentially as “ my lord ” and “ his lordship,” I asked him to join my naval friend and myself at supper.

“ To be sure, my dear fellow,” said Frederick, and departed.

“ Mr. Yates seems a privileged person with your lordship,” said Haymes ; “ while you speak to him, you are Benson Hill—yet.”

“ Don’t omit the Earl,” laughed I, “ for that title is truly mine. In a visit to Downing Street I used an official seal, to distinguish my new hat. You hailed me so warmly that I saw I might put your good humour to the test, and that popped into my head the idea of hoaxing my dear old messmate.”

“ Hoaxing ? what then you are no lord ? ”

“ Lord, no — Benson Earle Hill, the same as ever.”

“ Ay, the same rascal as ever for skylarking,” cried Haymes, giving me a thump on the back to ascertain the strength of my lungs ; “ *you* do me a good turn at the Admiralty ? you be—— ! you only be your original self, my boy, and d—n all favours ! ”

I had been present at a dinner, in aid of the Covent Garden Fund, at the Freemasons’ Ta-

vern, and had the gratification of witnessing the zealous endeavours of that kind-hearted man, and noble prince, the Duke of York, in behalf of the charity. His Royal Highness, though not gifted with the powers of oratory, was unquestionably an admirable chairman; his urbanity, the cordiality of his manner, and the evident delight he experienced in lending his countenance to such a cause, rendered him the idol of the actors.

A vocal treat of the first order had been provided by the committee, for their patrons and friends; in the course of which, Broadhurst was about to sing his favourite and deservedly admired air of "John Anderson my Joe:" as he proceeded, some Goths,

"at the *lower* end of the Hall,"

interrupted the vocalist by the cracking of nuts between their unmusical jaws; these sounds no sooner reached the ears of the impulsive Blanchard, than, stepping upon the Dais, he shook his steward's wand towards the offending parties, and roared out—

"G— damn ye, have ye no souls?"

in such a tone of earnestness as to draw down a peal of laughter and applause, in which Royal York joined most heartily.

The rebuke had the desired effect, and, soon

after, one of the vice-presidents took occasion to thank Blanchard for having maintained order whilst so beautiful a ballad was sung, requesting him again to exert his vigilance, as Mr. Mathews was about to favour the company.

“ I’m glad to hear it, my lord,” rejoined Blanchard, “and I’ve no doubt that the lovers of nuts will pay all due attention to my friend Mathews, as I can promise ’em it will be a crack song.”

This well-timed joke secured to the at all times fidgety Mathews a fitting audience, and a rapturous encore followed the execution of his comic chant.

Our festivities did not cease till near midnight—too late an hour for me to think of returning to quarters ; so, remembering that it was about the time that my friend Fairfield had promised to return me a small sum which I had lent him, I thought it as well to get a bed at the hotel where he lodged, and see him on the subject before I left town next day.

Previous to retiring to rest, I told the waiter to let Fairfield know that I was in the house, and also that I wished to meet him at breakfast.

The largeness of the dinner-party, its speechifying, cheering, singing, and, to say the truth, a more than usual allowance of wine, all tended to send me fast to sleep. From this profound

slumber I was aroused by a terrific knocking at about four o'clock in the morning; its violence and continuance tempted me to get up and look out of the window, to ascertain if it was a friendly intimation that the house was on fire; but all was dark, and thus satisfied I re-entered my bed; scarcely had I laid my head on the pillow, when I heard a heavy foot on the stair, and an indistinct murmur of voices; the sounds approached my room, and I shortly ascertained that Fairfield was venting a thousand curses upon the porter for having kept him in the street; presently my name was mentioned, and, in a moment after, Sim, having seized the candle from honest Boots, staggered into my room.

“Are you asleep, my good fellow?” he belowed; “jump up, and just see the luck I’ve had. By the holy man, I’ve bled some of them this night—see here, my boy, and here, and here!”

Saying which he pulled from the pockets of coat, waistcoat, and smalls, handfulls of notes crumpled up in disorder, a quantity of sovereigns, and a few pieces, certainly not the current coin of the realm, but, as I afterwards learnt, counters obligingly given in change by the considerate keepers of play-tables.

“There, you devil!” roared the elated gambler,

“ think of that !” and he made a huge pile of his ill-gotten wealth upon the counterpane. “ Isn’t that a fine haul ? I think they’ll allow for once that Sim Fairfield has broken the bank.”

“ ’Tis dreadfully late ; let me intreat you to go to bed, and we’ll talk over this affair in the morning ; stay one moment, whilst I secure this for you, and let me light you to your room.”

I thrust the notes and gold into a drawer, locked it, and after seeing the almost helpless drunkard into bed, placed the key under his pillow.

The guardianship of such an amount of booty did not add to the peacefulness of my slumbers. I was awakened constantly by ideal claimants upon the sum under my care, and heartily rejoiced I was when I heard people a-foot in the house ; locking my door, I secured an hour or two’s rest.

As soon as I had taken breakfast, I visited the sleeping Simon ; it was with difficulty I could arouse him from his heavy slumbers, nor was it ’till the waiter had supplied him with a copious draught of brandy and soda water, that I could induce him to put on his robe de chambre, and attend to me.

“ You will find the key under your pillow, Sim ; bring it with you.”

“Key! of what? why the devil have you made me get up in the middle of the night? and what’s the row?”

“Why, surely, you must recollect that you played last night.”

“Played! I’d like to know the night I *don’t*, till, by Jabus, I’m half ruined. I have a bill at this house of Lord knows how many weeks, besides a parcel of thundering boot-makers, hatters, and all sorts of snobs, that come bothering me, day after day, till I’m tired.”

“But you mean to pay them when you can, I suppose?”

“To be sure I will, to get rid of the varmint, and start afresh with them.”

“Now tell me, are you perfectly unconscious of all that happened to you last night?”

“Faith, I remember having mighty bad luck in Jermyn Street, and so then I went down to Pall Mall, got a skin full of Champagne, and took the box in a devil-may-care temper, and now I think of it, I did win ten or twelve pounds; but nothing worth your locking up and making a fuss about.”

“Sit down, and let me show you the real state of the case.”

Separating the notes from the gold, I took the amount of the former in their several sums, and,

after adding up the total, surprised the winner by stating it to be no less than eight hundred and sixty pounds.

“Eight hundred devils ! you don’t mean it?”

“I do ; and now let me take a friend’s privilege, and implore you to turn this to advantage for the rest of your life. Get out of debt first of all — you will have quite enough left to lodge with your agents for a company, and be *indeed* Captain Fairfield, renouncing these accursed hells for ever.”

“Then, by my soul, Hill, that’s good advice, and I’ll see if I can follow it. Out of debt I’ll certainly get, and, by the same token, I owe you a five-and-twenty, so take that and as much more as you like, if you have call to it.”

“Thank you, I only require my own, but let me hope you will think of what I’ve said.”

“Never fear, my dear boy ; but, by your leave, I’ll finish my sleep”—saying which he took possession of his coin and retired.

It grieves me to add that the fatal passion was too deeply rooted, advice was thrown away on the determined gambler. I met him a week after this event, and, in reply to my question as to the purchase of a company, he told me “he had lost every damned rap,” and even hinted that a very small loan would be acceptable. I shall

have more to say of the wretched Fairfield as I proceed.

How doubly sweet the air of my own garden used to seem to me, after a visit to the heat, dust, and smoke of London.

We reared not only flowers but fruit and vegetables; Turner worked zealously at the mechanical departments of horticulture, but he had no *science*. Though a soldier, his organ of destructiveness seemed but slightly developed.

My sister was one day uprooting some wild white convolvulus which had invaded and kept the sun from our French beans.

"Why are you doing that, if I may ax?" said Samuel, fiercely.

"Because it's a weed—it would spread—impoverish the soil—check the sap of every thing it bound—and there it goes!"

"Well," cried Turner, "all *I* can say is, 'twas as gen-teel looking a thing as any we have in our garden."

Thus, in the early spring, when I was clipping the dead branches from a raspberry bush, he muttered—

"What are you at with them *shrubs*, sir?"

"Pruning, man," quoth I, going on with my task.

"Ah!—*you* may say pruning, if you loike; but *I* calls it cutting the *natur* out of 'em."

Major General Millar had not only made us free

of his grounds, which formed a charming promenade, but frequently sent us "little pet plants," heliotropes, night-scented stocks, and musk roses.

One morning, when we descended to breakfast, Turner said—

"Here's two more pots from Millar's Roughs."

"Let us see them, then!"

"Whoy, so you shall directly.—His Scotch gardener's a toidy one, I reckon—I can't think how it could be, even by noight, this weather.—One little minniking thing's all frost about the edges—so I put *he* down afore the foire. T'other, with prettyish pink stars upon't, was kiver'd all over wi spoider's mess,—my missis ha bin cleaning 'em all off; she'll soon ha done, and *then* I'll bring 'em up."

The unlettered hind had been endeavouring to thaw an ice plant, and uncobweb an Arachne Cereus.

"Good Heaven! 'Turner," I exclaimed, "that frost is natural."

"What, in Summer?"

"Yes, as much as the spider-like film is natural to those pink stars—that's the beauty of them!"

"Is it?" grumped he—"one looked uncomfortable, and t'other nasty, and that's the beauty on 'em."

With all this ignorance Turner was not stupid; though he could wait at table, while jokes, quite

suiting the lowest capacity, abounded, and never move a muscle; his heightened colour betrayed his appreciation of them. He was in the habit of entertaining small select parties, "below Nathaniel," to whom he read the newspapers I lent him, with good emphasis and discretion, though his accent rendered the London journals very provincial.

He had persevered in improving his hand-writing by copying every scrap of mine which he could honestly obtain. Once, when I had gone on leave, I had procured furlough for him, bidding him write to me, as to the state of our Northern manufacturing districts; and a very sensible letter I received, directed to

"Esquire B. E. Hill, R. A."

Turner had actually begun a memoir of his own life! This I discovered by accident. Wanting a light, while he and his wife were from home, I went into the kitchen, and seized some paper, twisted and laid aside for the purpose. On examination it proved the commencement of my man's autobiography. The manuscript was already partially burnt. He had repented of the foul design. Perhaps he was wise! Yet such essays are often more diverting than the fruits of scholarly lucubration.

I remember one instance which, in my mind,

condenses the spirit of narrative poetry, with a grace beyond the reach of art."

The following lines are authentically "from a sailor," on an early incident in the life of Trafalgar's hero.

" Says Nelson's father once says he—
I wants a bear skin do ye see—
So Nelson once he sees a bear—
Says he I wants to skin that ere—
He takes his gun—runs down the side—
So kills the bear—and gets his hide—
When he comed back they did him tax
Because as how he didn't ax
Whether he mought go or no—and so—
He told um what it was you know—
As made him first come for to go."

I have retained the very tolerable orthography, and unpunctual—dashing style of the original, whose footless trunk might long be seen sunning itself before the gates of Greenwich Hospital.

This reminds me of a very different maimed character. A French master at the Cadet Academy, in my boyish days, the Chevalier Warren, had a wooden leg. One of our lads, named Cousins, could so imitate the sound of his gait, as to frighten all idlers of the French class, who believed their Mentor's self coming upon them. Warren detected this, and was pathetically, proudly wroth, saying to his mimic—

" Meestaire Cozen, Saar! for why you ensoolt my malheur? Young gentilman I deed not get my

vooden leg by jompeeng out of a bad-ous vindow. No, by Gar ! I lose my leem in de sairveece of my Keeng, fighteeng for my contré, in de field of honneur, ma foi. Sawm day, Monsieur, you shall be sorree, and veesh you nevare affronte de brave man, poor in de strange lan, by de joke on his vooden leg—eet is bad ma-nairc ! ”

Years clapsed, Cousins served with distinction, and returned to Woolwich with a timber toe. In the barrack field he saw approaching him old Warren, who at first did not recognize his former persecutor, but as soon as the young officer hobbled near enough for a “ Bon jour, Chevalier ! ” the Frenchman, staring at his mutilated member, recollected all the past, and cried—

“ Ah, by Gar, Monsicur Cozen, Saar, now we are queets ! ”

In a moment more he threw his arms about the wounded man, exclaiming, through his tears and kisses—

“ Ah, my poor, dear, fonny boy ! I am so sorree for heem ! I have had my joke—frogive me, and be prode dat you get de wooden leg in the glorious bataille—*La fortune de la guerre*—not by jomping out of bad-ous vindow, eh ! ”

CHAPTER II.

THE GREAT UNKNOWN—SHAKSPEARIAN RE-UNIONS—TALK OF THE D———A DOUBLE ANNIVERSARY—YATES SUI GENERIS—THE STORM—THE CONDEMNED CELL—MURDERING METHODICALLY—DON JUAN'S DEATH—ANTICIPATIVE PAINTING—AN UNPRIESTLY DEACON—TO THE TOWER WITH HIM!—A GALLERY TICKET—VANDYKES—BRAZEN VENETIANS—AUTOMATON SNUFF-TAKER—STRIKING IMPROBABILITY.

A FRIEND having sent me word that Sir Walter Scott was expected to visit the Arsenal, I hastened thither, hoping to get a glimpse of the “Magician of the North.” After lounging about for an hour or two, certainly pleasantly occupied, in chat with various acquaintance, I observed a bustle near the gate, saw the guard turn out, and salute somebody. Of course I knew that such a compliment could not be intended for the object of my curiosity, and, on inquiry, learnt that the visiter was the Prince of Hesse Homberg. Sir Walter did not appear; and, with all my loyalty, I confess that I

was not satisfied with the substitute chance had provided.

Although living a very domestic life, and enjoying, in company with my sister, the parties given by the married officers, I now and then used to pass a stray half hour at the barracks. "Barlow's Corner" was a rare rendezvous for gossip *al fresco*; we agreed, one day, to cast ourselves for Shakspeare's Worthies of Eastcheap — the great Captain, though a braver and a better man, our Falstaff; M'Cleod, his well-nosed Bardolph. Tim, Nym, Lawson, Beard, and I, were contending for the Prince, and *against* Poins and Pistol, when the fat wag saw that we had been uninvitedly joined by another Doctor of the corps, who was not of our clique, and to whom he said—

"*You shall double Mother Quickly, with the Boar's Head.*"

Whether he thought — a bore, or an old woman, I trust the Doctor was too well satisfied with *his own countenance* to take more offence than did tall B——, who, for his lack of flesh and fun, Barlow dubbed "the Anatomy of Melancholy."

I had promised to bring him a pound of his favourite snuff from town; and, on my forgetting to do so, he said "Benson, your *Façon de Paris* proves mere *façon de parler*."

"Coming events cast their shadows before."—

I was recounting, one evening to my friend, George Smith, between our games of piquet, the singular meetings with Charles Furlong that had befallen me,* and ended my account by observing, that the chain seemed now to be completely broken. I had left him in France, and, since then, had heard nothing whatever of his whereabouts. The next day, who should walk into my cottage but the identical Charles! who, after giving me an account of what had befallen him, since our gay doings in Valenciennes, concluded by the important information that he was married to a lady with sufficient fortune to enable him to settle down quietly, so that the chances of encountering one another again seemed very distant.

On the 7th of July, just before the Turners' dinner hour, I presented Samuel with a bottle of wine.

" 'Tis your wedding day, you know."

" *I* do," he exclaimed, " but how *you've* come to remember it, in this way, year by year, my missis and I can't make out."

" The mystery shall be solved then; 'tis my birthday, so drink all our healths; and, as you've troubled me with no brats yet, see you don't."

" Can't answer for that," he replied, " but it's your good will all the same."

I had my fears, and, bachelor-like, resolved that,

* Vide Recollections, &c. vol. ii., p. 278.

should an "Infant Samuel" arrive, the gunner must go back to his duty.

In the evening I went to Yates's Benefit at Covent Garden, on which occasion he performed Richard the Third "after his own manner," thus announced, that he might not be expected to interlard it with Imitations. He gave several points in a style as just as original and spirited; other parts of the character lacked dignity in his hands, and, by common consent, the audience seemed to attach "*l'air ridicule*" to the whole; so that when he exclaimed—

"I have no brother, I am like no brother,"

A man in the pit bawled—

"You're like nothing human!"

And convulsed the audience with laughter.

My little crony, whose genius I sincerely admired, bore my inhuman twittings on this head with superhuman good nature, though then he was but a man; he is now more than man, by two syllables—a Manager, as a Poetaster is greater than a Poet.

The 30th of July will long be remembered for the sublime and terrific thunder-storm that visited the southern portion of the island, from one extremity to the other. It was first observable in the mouth of the Bristol Channel, and continued its fearful course in the line of the Bath road, hang-

ing, for many hours, over the metropolis, and finally clearing away from the Dover coast. As the evening advanced, the appearance of the storm at Woolwich was grand beyond the powers of description. Over the capital, forked lightnings of the most eccentric shapes appeared to be hurled from Heaven; in the North, sheets of white fire played continually; whilst in the South, the electric fluid assumed the deepest crimson, alternating with flashes of the palest blue tints. The thunder roared in every quarter of the concave, the rain fell in torrents, catching, now and then, momentary prismatic effects from the vividness of the light. Never have I, even in the tropics, witnessed so awful a spectacle.

I was aware that it was the last night the wretched Nesbitt had to pass in this world. He was the next morning, on Penenden Heath, to pay the forfeit of his life for the murder he had committed on Mr. Parker and his housekeeper, and the arson he had attempted in Mulgrave Place. I could not but speculate as to whether he was conscious of the war of elements now visiting the scene of his guilt.

The next day, in conversation with the Rev. Mr. Messiter, one of our chaplains, I mentioned my surmise; he being a magistrate for the county, was able to inform me that the condemned cell of Maidstone goal is on the top of the prison, so that the unhappy

homicide was in a situation where he could not fail to see the lightnings of heaven, and hear the dreadful voice of the Lord in his thunders. After remarking on the extraordinary coincidence between the circumstances of this murder with that at Greenwich, by a wretch named Hussey, Mr. Messiter farther informed me that, on the evening in which the crime was committed, Nesbitt had, previous to his deed of blood, prayed very fervently for an hour in the presence of his wife, and appeared to be in a most blissful state of religious fervor; whether the man was a fatalist—I beg pardon, a Supralapsarian, that's the correct word for it—I know not, but his piety appeared to me sadly out of place.

Dr. Watson had often related a proof that these professors of “all saving faith” disdain such “moral rags” as decency and gratitude. The Doctor, though a handsome man, from being short-sighted, had acquired a habit of contracting his lids, when regarding any thing with interest. This gave him what Poole might call a *screw'd-in-eyes-ing* look. Having gone one Sunday to hear a celebrated preacher, he was distressed at observing an old woman, who, as the sermon proceeded, bent herself double, with horrible contortions, and groaned aloud. The Doctor, vexed at losing a word of the discourse, and seeing the attention of the congre-

gation diverted from the pulpit by this unhappy sufferer, stole on tip-toe to her side, whispering humanely —

“ Dear soul ! you are too ill to stay here ; better go home.”

“ No, no ! Oh, oh !” wailed the poor creature, swaying herself to and fro.

“ But, my good friend, think of the consequences ! pray !”

“ So I do—Oh ! let me alone.”

“ I cannot leave a fellow-being in such a state. For God’s sake, tell me what makes you ery thus !”

She looked up, and seeing him peering over her from his half-closed lashes, shouted vehemently —

“ Hold your gab, ye sqvinny-heyed son of a b— ! vy don’t ye see ’tis my dewotion ?”

This was heard through the chapel. If any of those present were able to restrain their laughter, our philanthropic divine was not one of them. He ran from the saered edifice, however, and gave way to his mirth elsewhere.

The devout dame ought to have been Nesbitt’s mother.

Let me not be thought unfeeling, if I mention, that on the same day justice elaimed her due, I lost, by the distemper, a pet spaniel. My man was fond of him, as he had been of “ Toiger,” who, by the

way, had found a kind master in Calcraft, when I left Canterbury.' The animal, he said, deserved a nobler name, and re-baptized him "Homo." They travelled much together, but finally the fine brute was stolen from his god-papa.

Tiger's successor in my establishment lived not long enough with us to render his loss a formidable affair.

Mrs. Turner had listened, whilst attending the poor little dog, to her husband's account of Nesbitt's crime and punishment, till the subjects had got tangled in her brain ; and though usually taciturn, she thus announced the catastrophes of both to her mistress.

"Poor Juan, ma'am ! and Nesbitt too, by this time, he's gone ! his last meal was chicken-broth. They couldn't sentence him to less for murder, dear gentle little thing ! setting the house on fire, too ! he would have grown up so useful ! hanging's too good for him — perfect beauty as he was ! so he's to be nottymized first — but I've cut one curl from his tail—which is indeed an awful fate."

Knowing my fondness for the fine arts, my brave friend Napier, who was mentioned in my first series, asked me to look at a picture he had just received. He had lately sat for his portrait, leaving the details to the artist's taste. It came home a striking likeness, but displaying what Mrs. Rams-

bottom would call a few "Anacreonisms." The Major appeared, not in the memorable blue sur-tout so turned up with *red* by his 18th of June wounds, but in full regimentals; one of the said wounds on his cheek healed to a scar, the Waterloo medal at his button-hole, and the battle of Waterloo blazing away all over the back-ground!

This was lengthening it to a rivalry with the siege of Troy. Surely those non-combatants, the ladies, will agree with me that there is nothing so unsatisfactory as a long engagement.

In August I received orders to take my tour of duty at the Tower, and it was no additional satisfaction to me that my companion in this temporary banishment was a captain, whose hospitality on a memorable night I have before recorded; but, as he professes "a horror of being lugged into print," I shall say no more of him. The duties to be performed were not over-fatiguing, allowing plenty of time for making pilgrimages to the habitable parts of London, and these visits I usually paid by taking boat, and thus avoiding the ills Mr. Belcour so faithfully describes—

"So much hurry, bustle, and confusion, on your quays; so many sugar casks, porter butts, and common council men, in your streets, that, unless a man marched with artillery in his front, 'tis more

than the labour of Hercules can effect, to make any tolerable way through your town."

Having secured a comfortable home for my sister, I took the opportunity of visiting with her the various exhibitions then open. The British Gallery, in Pall Mall, was filled with a collection of historical portraits, lent for the purpose, by royal, noble, and other patrons of the arts.

You were thus not only familiarised with the forms and habits of the greatest men (some ladies too) who had flourished from the reign of Henry IV. to our own day, but enabled to trace the rise and progress of Painting in Britain, from the rude effigy to the all but breathing figure.

I think that "Dr. Brown," who was so "gallows polite" as to assert that all our pleasures depended on association of ideas, would have been posed by the following fact.—There was one portrait which so riveted the attention of many, as well as myself, that we forgot to consult our catalogues, and ascertain who it represented—by whom it had been done. The face was not young; it was set off neither by the features nor the colours which we are accustomed to *associate* with our *ideas* of beauty. The dress was dark and plain, yet, as we approached, our voices sunk, our bared heads bent before that "mild, pale, penetrating" visage; its melancholy contemplative traits seemed quiver-

ing—I expected to be thrilled by the subdued voice, I longed to ask his advice. When I could tear my eyes away, and refer to the pamphlet I held, the names of Strafford and Vandyck accounted for every thing. It was the countenance of the gallant, sensitive, self-sacrificing Thomas Wentworth, which the glorious Antony had transmitted for the admiring reverence of future ages.

Whilst speaking of association of Ideas, I will here give a whimsical proof of it.

The child of a brother officer, proud to boast that “Pa was in the army,” so connected the form of prayer he heard at the garrison chapel, every Sunday morning, with the military music to which he listened every Sunday afternoon, that he asked — “Mamma, have the Army of *Martyrs* got any *band*?”

But to return to sight-seeing. A panorama of Venice was then exhibiting in the Strand. It embraced the Piazza and Church of St. Mark, the famed bell-tower, and the archway over which is placed the celebrated astronomical clock, surmounted by two bronze figures, who, like the venerable dumbies of St. Dunstan, struck the hours, with this difference only, that the Venetian figures performed that duty from one to twenty-four o'clock.

Some years ago, some Austrian officers, occupying the Broglio, were enjoying their pipes and

iced sherbet, when one of them suddenly starting from his chair, exclaimed—

“ Good Heaven, how extraordinary ! can I have been deceived ? No, as I live and breathe, he is now blowing his nose ! ”

“ Well, what is there so extraordinary in that ? ” demanded one of his comrades.

“ Extraordinary ! the most surprizing thing I ever saw. You may laugh at me if you like, but mark me, no man shall question my veracity, and I affirm that I saw one of the bronze figures of the clock yonder take a pinch of snuff, and afterwards use a handkerchief.”

“ Bravo ! you have seen a wonderful sight indeed,” cried more than one voice.

“ Did he offer his box to his neighbour ? but may be *that* gentleman smokes ; look again, most clear-sighted youth, and say if *he* has a pipe in his mouth.”

“ No sneering, sir,” said the youngster. “ What I saw I will swear to, and let no man say me nay, or — ”

“ Or what ? ” asked the fire-eater of the regiment.

“ He must cross swords with me.”

“ Is that all ? then I say a brass man can’t take snuff ; will that do for a *nay* ? ”

“ Enough.”

The room being sufficiently spacious for the

purpose of the *Duello*, the silly lads were on the point of attacking each other, when the Colonel, a veteran, beloved by his corps, entered, and placing himself between the combatants, demanded the cause of the quarrel—it was explained to him.

“ Boys, boys, for shame ! What, tilt at each other on such grounds ? Hear my decision—Alfred is right ; a bronze man can’t take snuff. Paul is right too ; what he declares to have seen, I also witnessed, and a good laugh I had at the droll effect. Put up your weapons, and listen to the truth. One of the figures being out of repair, it has been taken down ; but, to prevent any disappointment to the good people of Venice, as to their favourite time-piece, a man has been sent up to do duty for the brass gentleman, till he is fit to resume his station. And the poor devil no doubt was glad enough of a pinch of snuff to keep him awake whilst thus situated. Shake hands this moment ; and if either of you object, why, by the sword of the Emperor, he shall supply the snuff-taker’s place for the next twenty-four hours !”

CHAPTER III.

HOOKE'D IN BY MATHEWS—STAGE LIONS—A UNIQUE TRAGEDY—MAT'S NEVER—A LIGHT SUPPER—THE CONFLAGRATION—THE ARMOURY—A QUEAN CAN SWAGGER AND GET &C.—A BLONDE MINERVA—THE RACES—A GREAT MAN'S SON.

TOWARDS the end of the week I met Mathews, who invited me to dine with him on the Sunday, at his cottage.

“ You will meet Liston and Terry, with their better halves, and I shall be delighted to make you known to ——”

Mathews here named a gentleman I had long wished to know, and whose intimacy I now enjoy ; but, I must not, at his own suggestion, either name or praise him, however much disposed I feel so to do.

My to-be host said, with much solicitude—

“ I do trust it will be all delightful ; it ought to be, but there's no telling. Whenever *I* set *my* heart on a day's proving particularly pleasant, some con-

founded thing or other is sure to happen, and mar all my best arrangements."

"My dear sir," said I, "what cloud can you anticipate on this occasion? Mr. ——"

"May he d—d! 'Nota bene, I didn't mean swearing,' 'Horace, hem!' but a comedy of his, ——'s, not Smith's, comes out on the Saturday night; Liston and Terry both in it; now *you* don't know, the more gracious your estate, but *I* do, that an imperfect messenger may ruin the best play ever written; even with the enlightened audience of this most tasteful metropolis. Should any abominable stick cause a hitch there, and matters go amiss, *he* won't come. Then just fancy Terry testy, and Liston lachrymose! You'll see the piece of course, and, if all's right, mind, I shall expect you."

I, like Wordsworth's little boy, had "a fit of joy," and "no misgivings," nor need of any. Sam and Sir Christopher did their author justice. The public was just to us all, the success brilliant; and, on the Sabbath, I tore myself from a day dream of Lady Cranberry, (Mrs. Mardyn, I mean,) to dress for my appointment.

My fellow diners-out soon cottoned to me. Terry, immortal Dan! warmed my heart by his West-country impressiveness of accent. Liston's elegant figure contrasted gloriously with the loose and greasy

aspect it had assumed on the foregoing evening ; all were in first-rate spirits and temper. I now, indeed, saw Mathews at Home, in a well-appointed establishment of his own, the reward of his individual exertions ; and beheld the still increasing gallery, of which the auld Scots' wife had been the nucleus. There we lounged, awaiting our dinner, which Mr. — assured me would be “special, as they did things in high *style* at High-gate.”

“You are out,” said Terry, drily ; “this place *now* stands in Kentish Town, but *is* not, nor ever *was*, in Millfield Lane. To live in a lane is as incompatible with *our* habits as paying visits in a hackney coach, or understanding the use, the very name of pattens.”

Permitted to rummage the book-shelves, I stumbled on what, at first sight, I thought a music-book, from its size and shape. On the cover shone the King's arms. I opened it, and found several coloured illustrations. Men in ruffs and top-boots, manacled by a profusion of large sticky-out sausages. Mexicans in sedans, the moon with a black patch over one eye, and other scarcely credible samples of the fine arts, tempted my regards towards the letter-press. First came a dedication (to some noble Duke) of what the writer termed “my grand work,” “KORANZO'S FEAST, OR THE UNFAIR MARRIAGE.”

“Where, when, and how, did you become possessed of this?” I asked Mathews.

“That,” he said, with a careless glance at the outside; “I bought it, by chance, in a lot, at an auction, and have never looked at it since.”

Liston, Terry, and ——, now joined me; a few glimpses convinced us that Mathews was the unconscious proprietor of a literary curiosity, a *feast* indeed; we could hardly trust the evidence of our eyes, or suppress our laughter, as we turned the pages of this deep tragedy.

We were called to dinner. Our fare was sumptuous, characterized by extreme good taste. It was, however, with no little surprise, that I beheld a noble sirloin placed before my host. Recollecting the two preceding dinners, I was determined to call it “sun, or moon, or Cheshire cheese,” or mutton, had Mathews offered to help me to it as such, which I half expected.

“What, Mat,” said Terry, “you still adhere to that good old English substantial, and still, I suppose, retain your detestation for mutton? Never shall I forget your anathematising a whole flock of innocents, who were making their way to a pond to slake their thirst, an unusual sight, by the way, but true in this instance — ‘Ah, do get into the water, ye woolly fools, and drown yourselves, ’twill be no loss, you’re not fit food for any thing but fishes.’”

“ Dan, that’s an invention of your own. I was always remarkably fond of mutton.”

“ Do you remember that matter-of-fact rascal at ——?” asked Mr. ——.

“ Oh, confound him, yes. I shall never forget it, the beast! however, I didn’t mind. I carried my point.”

“ May I ask what victory you achieved?” said I.

“ Oh, let —— tell it, he was present.”

“ Mathews and myself were travelling together, some time ago, and, on returning to our inn, his favourite supper fare was not provided. The landlord was summoned, and soundly rated for his neglect, which he attempted to justify; this so enraged our friend, that he told the innkeeper to have ‘ half a dozen sirloins, and a peck of potatoes, for his supper every night he staid in the town.’ By Jove! the following night we found the order executed to the letter; a Mont Blanc of mashed potatoes, and six cold sirloins were placed on table with the most provoking gravity by the waiter—Red Lion himself hoping that we should find enough.”

These two traits were not very well relished by their hero; so, to elevate our thoughts, which had fallen upon the flesh pots, Mr. —— proposed the performance of the Agreeable Surprize for the benefit of Mr. Mathews and the ladies.

“ Lucky,” he continued, setting Koranzo upon the table, “ that it is a wide-spreading tome, of large type ; so, as I defy any one pair of lungs to get through it, I will distribute the characters, that we, the initiated, the elect, may read alternately. Liston, I cast you for the pathetics — Let’s see ! Lord and Lady Strawberry, Koranzo, King Quastenuch, and Princess Lampodo ; nice names ! Terry must do General, and Mrs. Hacket, Castanos, every one of the children, Dr. Winterbottom and Dr. Pill. I’ll go on for Mrs. Hector, (the false Lady Strawberry) the Ghost, the Judges, and other wild beasts, the Moon, with the rest of the supernumeraries. Hill is to keep his countenance, if he can, and prompt, or finish a part in case of sudden indisposition ; in fact, supply any hiatus made if the beasts should roar.”

“ Come, come, my ——,” said Mathews, “ no hoaxing ; all these names and things are, of course, extemporised out of your own head : but if your accomplices were to swear it, you don’t expect *me* to believe that such queernesses ever actually existed in any printed book, least of all in that ! and *I* have it ten days in house without finding ’em out.”

“ *I’ll trouble you,*” put in Terry, “ to look at the pictures. Might not the genius who designed *them* just as easily order ‘ a Belshazzar’s banquet

from Birch's on Cornhill,' or bid a Daniel in the lion's den 'go to the jubilee of Louis XVIII.?' "

"Oh, certainly," cried Mathews, rubbing his hands, "if these wonders *can* be authentic specimens, read it all, and begin directly."

Unless I had now the book at hand, from which to give extracts, it is impossible for me to convey any adequate idea of its varied beauties; still less am I able to depict the humour with which they were delivered. Neither dear Mrs. Terry's Caledonian, nor sweet Mrs. Liston's specific gravity, could stand it.

Mr. —, as "Mrs. Hector in high glee, with two children a-pulling," convulsed us all. His utterance of "the ghost nods, *nods*," suiting the action to the word, was a lesson for any Lord Burleigh; but when he came to the *directions*, which the writer had extended beyond the *stage*, "We pay respect, the house will rise," it was too much.

Then Liston's bridal air in the song, at

"We are like two birds as sits to eat
On the branch of the very same tree."

His maternal anxiety in the question, "Dr. Winterbottom, can you not tell me what *is* the matter with my dear children to-day?"

And Terry's conclusive manner of reply, "Subject to fits."

There was in one act "a form of trial," wherein a young convict, asked why he is sentenced,

answers, "I killed my old father, ninety years of age." Lord Strawberry, who, at this crisis, if my memory serves me, is "mad in peacock's feathers," rejoins, "surely *that* is not a *sin*." The parricide thus explains —

"It was left in our *family will*, that the throats should be cut, when supposed to be dead; now *I* cut the throat a quarter of an hour too soon, which the judge says *is* a sin, for *he* would have died soon enough if I had left him alone; so I am sent down the stream like a turnip with its top cut off."

Or words to that effect. I may not quote literally from a work which I have perused but once since that evening, (Mathews lent it me to take home a few months afterwards;) but I pledge my honour that, far from exaggerating, I cannot, at this remote period, deal fairly with scenes every one of which teemed with the most outrageous extravagancies. Whether set down in sober sadness, or perpetrated by some daring wag, Mathews was wild with curiosity to ascertain. His denunciations against us all, if each did not procure a copy on the morrow, were full of ludicrous ferocity. Stitches in our sides, and aches in our jaws, we separated.

Alas, my inquiries proved that we had little chance of participating in our friend's good fortune. The facts were these; a footman, named Hayes, turning from his bible to play-books and the theatres,

lost (as no unnatural nor unusual consequence) whatever he might have had of reason ; and scrawled this extraordinary farago, for the publishing of which he raised a subscription among the nobles and gentry who had seen him while in service ; but ere above twenty copies had been issued, Smeeton's printing office, in St. Martin's Lane, was burned down, and with it the remains of the impression. I believe the inspired sufferer died of his loss. Now, as nineteen people out of twenty might either have no time or no taste for exploring the charms of this illuminated volume, it is more than probable that refined young ladies have curled their locks in "Princess Lampodo's slip," calling the whole, as some grave critic did Tom Thumb, "quite a burlesque ;" or illiterate cooks may have skewered the heroic Castanos over a roasting joint ; and though "this was like my marriage, very unfair," it renders the Highgate copy a lone and priceless pearl. Into that treasure I wrote the above particulars, and saw in the catalogue of my lost friend's effects, the book mentioned as "with an autograph note." My hand-writing had the advantage of slightly resembling that of the great man.

Whether Koranzo now rests in the British Museum, or is to be produced at the Olympic, a great many pretty things might be purchased with the price it ought to fetch. Whoever has had, or

may have, the delight of meeting with this Melpomenic *chef d'œuvre* may well envy me the privilege of assisting at its representation in such a goodly company.

Fame and peace be with those of them who are gone ! and, with the survivors, all the mental mirth that should reward hearts free from malice, and from meanness !

The Tower of London, at the period I am now describing, had not received the advantage of a visit from the learned antiquary, Dr. Meyrick. The Horse Armoury was the strangest jumble imaginable—a thigh piece of the fourth Harry formed part of the military stomacher of Queen Elizabeth ; a morion of Henry the Seventh's time was solemnly pronounced by the sagacious Beef-eater to be “ the helmet of the Captain of Pontius Pilate's body guard.” Swords, bearing the well known impress of “ John Runkel Solingen,” were said to be blades of Damascus,

“ Of the ice-brook's temper.”

There was one apartment which required no guide to point out its interesting features—I allude to the State prison. The carvings made by the several captives on the walls had been carefully preserved, and could not fail to excite the most lively sensations of pity and regret for the many brave, learned, and pious occupants who thus had

beguiled the tedious hours of their captivity, from which the block had only delivered them.

Before the day on which, according to the Almanac, " Partridge-shooting commences," I had returned to my cottage, and again enjoyed the delight of having those friends, whose habits were most congenial to me, at my board. It happened, however, at this period, that there was one subject engrossing the attention of all classes, which, in spite of its unfitness for discussion, found its way into every circle — I mean the trial of Caroline of Brunswick. I believe I can safely assert that her name was less frequently mentioned within my walls than in any other house of the garrison, as I candidly avowed my entire conviction of her guilt, but, at the same time, requested, as a personal favour, that a subject so revolting should not occupy conversation, when so many other topics might be found, with which party spirit could not interfere.

I confess I have a great distaste for female politicians, no matter which side of the question they may advocate. There resided near me a wealthy widow, who, by way of distinction from two other ladies of the same name, was called, from the site of her house, Mrs. Common —. This loyal and pious enthusiast was so horrified at the writings of Hone, that she ordered her carriage, drove to his

shop, held forth on the evil of his ways, and the peril of his soul. He heard her with patience, but, at the end of her *tirade*, confessed himself unchanged.

“Why then,” she said, rising, “farewell, unhappy man! but, when called on to account for your sins, remember the Lady with the Light hair!”

It was contrary to her politics to confess any symptoms of Wiggery.

When asked why she had taken this romantic pilgrimage, she replied—

“I hear that our officers read the monster’s works. I have a regard for their morals; as, though my own military connections are broken, I still feel some little *corps d’esprit*.”

Admirable Monitress!

In the latter part of the autumn our Garrison Races attracted vast numbers of persons from London and its neighbourhood. The course was well adapted for seeing the heats, from starting to winning posts; and, as at most military races, the owners rode their own horses, there was not the slightest chance of any of that trickery which commonly disgraces meetings of higher pretensions!

Young Charles Mathews was my guest on the occasion, and certainly appeared to relish his visit extremely. He was then about seventeen years old;

very ready to display his talents for comic singing, and *improvising* ; his audience were just as ready to admire, for he was an amiable warm mannered lad, and left me, expressing himself delighted not only with the sport he had witnessed, but the wonders Woolwich presents to the visiter.

I am now about to relate the circumstances connected with a sporting bet, which happened some years ago, and which I omitted to place in its correct chronological order, in my former volumes.

CHAPTER IV.

A RECOLLECTION—SCOTCH AND IRISH — MY BETTERS—A HOG-MANED RACER—HUNGER BEATS.

THE Gordon Highlanders, the Limerick county Militia, and a brigade of Artillery, constituted in the year 1811 the garrison of Athlone. Its central situation, and the extensive works which had been constructed on its north-west side, required, at least, as large a military force as the above for the various guards daily mounted over the barracks, ordnance stores, and the lines.

The best possible feeling existed between the officers of these regiments, although the gallant Highlanders maintained, on all occasions, an air of conscious superiority over their militia friends.

It was my good fortune to be on terms of friendship with both corps. That worthy son of Caledonia, Lamont of Lamont, would greet me with a hearty shake of the hand, and “How’s a’ wi’ ye the day?” whilst the courtly old peer, Lord Muskerrie, had a kind word to say in the blandest

brogue. So much for the colonels. Majors, captains, and subs were all known to me ; many of the two latter grades my companions in divers choice pieces of mischief.—But I am not going to relate any adventure of my own, and have only made the above remarks as my good feeling towards both nations is, in a measure, of consequence to the story I now venture to relate.

I was leunging one morning at the door of the 92nd mess-room, with a bevy of kilted cronies, when our attention was attracted by an arrival in the barrack-square. A fine lad, who had joined the Limerick only a few days, rode through the gates. He was not a native of the county to which his regiment belonged, but boasted of high Milesian blood ;—doubtless with abundant right to such a distinction, his father being an apothecary in Newtown-Limavaddy, and withal most celebrated for the wondrous cures which he had wrought on quadrupedal patients ; not that I mean to insinuate this “ physicianer ” was nothing better than a “ cow-doctor,” but the district in which he resided was remarkable for the salubrity of its air, as affecting the “ humane species,” and for a variety of diseases among hoofed and horned cattle.

But to the son and heir of this Irish farrier-surgeon and Bull’s apothecary. No sooner was he aware that our gaze was upon him, than he insidiously

applied the spur, promoting various capers and caracoles “to witch the world with noble horsemanship;” nor did he cease to display his proficiency in the mysteries of the *manège* as he approached the barracks; on the contrary, he caused his steed to rear, kick, and plunge so violently, and so very near the mess-room door, that it was a service of danger any longer to watch the evolutions of this Connaught Centaur.

“Ech, my man, be eareful! d’ye no ken the stanes are het and sleppery? ye may get a fa’ before ye’re aware o’t,” remarked the good-hearted old Major.

“Och, the devil a fear, Mejur! I’d like to see the horse that could spill me,” replied the youngster. “It’s only the feed he gets that makes him so full of spirit — He’s been used to’t in my father’s stables, who has as ilegant a stud of hunters and raeers as ever you seen.”

“And whieh, sir, may I ask,” continued the Major, “do you denominate your chesnut?”

“Why he’s aqual to aither, I’d hunt him in Roscommon, or mateh him at the Curragh, for any sum under a thousand.”

The poor half-starved, ewe-necked haek, had, during this dialogue, stood perfectly quiescent; so we deseended from our place of vantage, and, much to the surprise of the lad, took a regular survey of

this "high charactered" animal, determined to derive entertainment *from* man and horse.

"As pretty a pair of broken knees as I ever beheld!" remarked one.

"You're a mighty big judge of horseflesh," replied the rider, colouring up to the eyes at the unlucky discovery, "a mere graze the crature got, topping a six-foot dyke."

"How wou'd he come on his knees in crossing a dyke, sir? the thing's no possible,—certes ye may baith have stuck in the mud, but supposing that the dyke were pairfitly dry, the banks wou'd na be that hard as to cause sic an awfu' disfigurement as yon."

"It would be mighty well, sir, for you when you talk about any thing, to know what you're talking about," retorted the vexed equestrian; "them as knows their mother-tongue can tell you that in Ireland the English for dyke is stone-wall, and if any of ye has a fancy to go out schooling* with me, I'll engage to show you some sporting leaps, that ye'll not be in any kind of hurry to take yourselves."

"That's a tolerably good imitation of a string halt," observed another of our party.

"Now *you're* out; it's only the remains of a strain he got the day he won the cup at Ballyswilly

* The game of Follow the leader on horseback.

hoolestown ; but I'm not going to stand here to have my horse — better never was crossed—pulled to paces by them as don't wear the convayniences for riding. I wonder where that lazy vabyboned of a groom of mine is? I must send the Bar'ny boy to stable and get ready for the afternoon drill ; the Devil ride a hunting with our sergcant-major, that has the impertinence to say I'll not be fit for duty this month."

" Couldn't you prevail on Lord Muskerry to let you fall in on horseback ?" asked Captain Ross, with a somewhat malicious expression.

" Naboclish !" returned the Milesian, " I know 'tis funning me ye are, but I'm not so ' aisily hated' as poor Larry in the song was ; so onct for all, if you are for a match," and again the arined heel of the speaker made the poor beast curvet, " I'll run against any of ye !"

" Hoot mon ! don't run against *me*," cried little Wallace, the Quarter-master, who was at the moment trying to make his way through the group to the Colonel's rooms. " Ye might keep your garron still, I think ; its just sinfu' to be digging them great butcher's spurs into the ribs of the beast, for the Lord kens there's na flash on the back of it to cover him."

" Come, come, Wallace," cried Captain Ross, " don't disparage the noble animal ; it's a racer, man, and has won a cup."

“Ca ye the likes o’ that skaleton a racer? I’d wager a year’s pay that I’d find a beast to beat him in a month.”

“There’s a sporting bet for you, sir,” said Captain M’Donald; “will you take it?”

“Let’s hear what it is,” replied the equestrian, dismounting from his steed, and handing him over to the charge of a soldier in a fatigue jacket, who had previously been named with the brevet rank of Groom.

“It’s this just,” answered Wallace. “I’ll undertake to race a beast o’ mine against that poor miserable harrin-gutted animal o’ your’s, within a month of this varay day, on eondetion, d ye perceive, that four-and-twenty hours nottis o’ time and place be deemed good and sufficient on my part, and that the choice of the ground to be run over, the course, ye ken, be left entirely to me, and the stakes shall amount, to the vally of a *month’s* pay, and no the twelve I was fule like enuech to name the noo.”

As there was a numerous clan of little Wallace’s running about in the worthy Quarter-Master’s quarters, I took the liberty of saying—

“Excuse me, my good sir, but recollect you will have all the expence of training, &c. Supposing we make up a purse of ten guineas amongst us, and let the officers of the Limerick know that a day’s sport is intended, they will join in the fun with pleasure,

and back 'the Barony boy,' for such is the name of this high-mettled racer."

"I'll back the Bar'ny boy meself entirely, without being beholden to any one," was the spirited remark of the owner of the animal.

"Barney boy or Blarney boy, is it a bet?" asked Wallace, drily.

"It is, for ten guineas; that's eleven pound seven and sixpence Irish. Done!"

"And noo, gentlemen," said Wallace, "I think we could na do better than appoint Maister Hell the umpire, for ye see it's a sort of a —— kind of a naational competetion; the lad's Irish, and sa are a' his freends; we're fra the land o' cakes; Hell's an Englisher, and sa ye see he'll no be prajudecced on ane side or tither."

"Bravo, Wallace! ye're a tanny chiel, and your choice is accellent," said the Major; "will you take the office, my freend?" he added, turning to me.

"Willingly, if the other party consents."

The young Hibernian, his handsome face beaming with good humour, and by no means displeased at his having thus suddenly become an object of interest to "the Regulars," advanced towards me, saying—

"I'll be right glad, sir, to have you for my umpire; I was promised to be made known to you by Major Spread, the next time you dined at our Mess."

“Let us waive ceremony, sir,” I replied; “I shall be glad to cultivate your acquaintance, and you may be sure that I will exercise what judgment I may possess most impartially, in the responsible situation Mr. Wallace and yourself have been pleased to confer on me.”

The beat of drum broke up our meeting, my friends hastening to their rooms to put on belt, sword, and sash, for the coming parade.

I shall not trespass on the patience of my reader by describing what past during the month allowed for training, but content myself with saying that the frequent questions put to Wallace were invariably answered by—

“Wait and ye’ll see just. I’ll win the race, ye may depend on’t, though I’ve hard that they Lim’-rick lads are offering a fu’ odds against me.”

This confidence on the part of the Quarter-Master seemed to me well founded; as, two or three times whilst visiting the Lines, I encountered him, with a smiling face, and a look of anticipated triumph. Why he should choose this particular *locale* for his daily walk I could not guess, as no stable existed nearer than the long range within the high walls of the Barrack square; it was possible that he loved to promenade where, unobserved, he might calm his aspiring thoughts and elegant ideas, after visiting the Flying Childers he had chosen, to humble the pride of the Barony boy’s master.

It was within the time allowed by a day or two, when I received notice that "the match would come off," the next afternoon, at three; and I was requested to attend at the spot selected by Wallace for the trial of speed and skill. It appeared to me a somewhat extraordinary place for the purpose, being no other than the interior of the works already mentioned; and I must here apprise my reader that this irregular fortification consisted of two or three spacious bastions, connected by long walls, technically called curtains, presenting a formidable altitude on the exterior, but having broad ramparts within, on which the ordnance were placed, and where infantry could act, if occasion required; the hollow space between these high banks of earth was not sufficiently capacious to allow of a ring, or a straight course upon it, being encumbered with store-houses and piles of shot and shell.

Time would, however, bring truth to light; I should be sure to know all ere twenty-four hours had passed, and, therefore, awaited the event with patience.

At an early hour of the day—

“the important day,

Big with the fate of *Wallace* and *his bet*”—

an unusual bustle was observable in the barrack yard, nor was the stir confined to the male part of its inhabitants; it was evident that this wager had excited the most lively interest among the fair sex.

“ Ye’ll gang and see the race, na doubt, Mistress Mac Alister ? ” asked an old woman, whose gray hairs and decrepid figure ill-accorded with the vivacious tone of her question.

“ I canna preceesely say whether or no I shall be able, Mem, ” answered her friend, “ for I’ve nearly a’ the hose and sarks o’ twa companies—my gudeman’s and aue the Adjetent ga’me, in the suds the noo, so I’ll ha’ to stiek to my tub, I’m thinking, and lose the sight that I may na’ lose the siller ye ken.”

“ I say, Mother Gladle, *a cuishla*,* are ye goin to see our young offichere take the shine out of the *omadhaun*† of a Scotch Quarther-master ? ” demanded a young private of the Limerick.

“ Is it meself that wou’d miss the fun, *ma vouchal*‡ ? sure and aint I goin to back the darlint, *a lanna ma chree*§ ? don’t I know his flesh and blood cousin, Squire Murphy, of Castle Murphy ? nice place it will be when it’s built ! and hav’n’t I got an old thirteen, and three fi’penny bits in the pocket of me, that I mane to sport upon the coorse this blessed day ? ”

“ It’s well to be you, Misthress Gladle, entirely ; sure the fi’p’nies will be enuff for the bets, and wid the thirteen you and I can have an illegant snack before we go, *a hinnee* ! || ”

* Term of fondness. † Fool. ‡ My boy. § Child of my heart.
|| My honey.

“ Who ax’d you for your company, you *raube-
ragh* !* I’m goin wid dacent people, and not wid
the likes of you, tall fellow as ye are, and handsome
as ye consate yourself.”

These and such like “discoorses” I could not
avoid hearing as I past the speakers. As the hour
approached, the barracks were left to the undis-
turbed possession of the sentries, all who could
keep holiday making their way to the Works.

In order that the necessary preliminaries might
be arranged in good time, I was early on the
ground, which I found nearly covered by the
men, women, and *childer* of the garrison, with
here and there a knot of civilians, who had “heard
of the match, and wouldn’t lose the fun on no ac-
count.” Wallace soon joined me, and I could not
but smile at observing the extraordinary contrast
of his present excited appearance, with his usual
meek sonsy deportment.

“ Noo then, Maister Hell, my freend, the first
thing for me to do is to show you the ground I
have fixed on, and then we’ll clear the course, and
prepare for a start. Sergeant Anderson, stiek a
bandy roll down here ; that’s the starting-post ;
and come awa wi’ me, and I’ll show you the win-
ning-post.”

Saying this, he elbowed his way through the
crowd, for about a hundred-and-fifty yards, along

the principal rampart of the work, and again a bandrol was fixed.

“It has chapped twa mair than half-an-hour, so we’ll lose na time;” then elevating his voice and his person, he bawled out in Gaelic for the Highlanders to move away from the space between the two flags. Oddly enough his directions were completely intelligible to his Hibernian hearers, and the dense mass began to stir. It struck me that no possible harm could occur to the parapets by their occupation for so brief a space, and I bade the bystanders jump up and take their seats upon them. It would be in vain should I attempt to describe the scrambling and crushing which followed this order; the derangement of the draperies of the females, who were handed or hauled up, did not occasion so much uproarious mirth as accompanied the awkward escalade of my kilted friends; those who were not so fortunate as to obtain seats in this enviable situation contented themselves with forming a double, and, sometimes, triple line upon the edge of the opposite slope.

Scarcely had this arrangement been completed, when a loud shout from the Limerick lads announced the arrival of their hero. Young Mr. O’Fogerty, in a racing jacket of sky-blue, with yellow sleeves, and a pink jockey-cap, mounted on his fiery steed, and surrounded by a large body of his

brother officers, now advanced to where Wallace and myself, attended by an equal number of the 92nd, stood.

“ Here I am, sir, for the honour of Ireland !” gallantly exclaimed the equestrian ; “ I hope you’re not going to disgrace the Bar’ny boy, by naming any blackguard, broken-winded hack to match him. Is your’s well bred ?”

“ He’s well fed, and that’s eneuch for me, or at least he will be by and by,” replied Wallace, with a knowing wink, and glancing at the condition of his rival’s steed, on whom the month’s training had produced the effect of any thing but an increase of flesh.

“ Well, sir,” said O’Fogerty, burning with impatience to prove himself a Chifney, “ where’s the winning-post ?”

“ Yon wee bit flag ; you can judge of an animal’s speed as weel in a hundred and fifty yards as in a three mile course, and the terms, ye ken, are a’ of my ain proposing ; but ech, sirs ! there’s ane thing I was clean forgetting. Maister Hell will be at the winning-post ; ye must name some gentleman to gi’ the signal for starting ; will Major Spread have the goodness to do it ?”

“ Why, my good sir, as we have in this country the highest legal authority for stating that no man

can be in two places at one time, unless he is a bird, I will start you with pleasure."

A loud huzza from the sons of Shannon's side followed the Major's acquiescence.

"Noo then, I'll bring up my beast;" saying which a square wooden machine, carefully covered with tarpaulin, was wheeled to the spot by four men of the Wallace faction.

"Death alive! do you mean to say your horse is in that case?"

"I didna say horse, I said a beast; and if my beastie doesna win, why you'll put the gowd in your poke, and crow over me and welcome."

The appearance of this black and somewhat mysterious looking object attracted the most lively attention.

"It's no horse but a *sheog** he has there," remarked one of the Hibernian spectators.

"You're not far out, my man," observed Wallace.

"My heavy hathred upon you! is my countryman to have dalings with the likes o' them? sure he's not such a *kiolawn*† to venture."

"Hould your wisht, Ned Collopy, and don't be spiling sport, wid your shuperstitions!" rather angrily remarked a corporal of the Limerick to his alarmed comrade.

"Noo then, Maister Hell, to your post; just gi'

* Fairy.

† Mad Fool.

us a shake of the bandy roll, when you're there, and then the Major will say the ane, twa, threc, and awa !"

"Do you ride the animal?" I asked, as I was about to leave.

"*Me* ride! the Lord keep me from crossing siccan a steed !"

A few minutes brought me to the appointed spot ; there I found Sergeant Anderson, flag in hand, with something at his feet, covered up in like manner to what I presumed contained the Quarter-Master's Bucephalus. Through the long and somewhat narrow lane of human beings I could clearly see what was going on at the starting-post. The moment Wallace removed the tarpaulin, shouts, roars of laughter, and deep groans burst from those near enough to discern the contents.

"It's a powny just," observed one close to me.

"Faix, I'm after thinking it's a monkey, or may be a bear."

"Bathershin ! how would the likes of them hate a horse? Ye'll find it's a buck-hound, or some fleet divil, that will run wi' the speed o' light."

"Be aisy now, ean't you be quite? sure there's the Major by the side of young O'Fogerty : they'll be off in a jiffy."

Wallace, too, was to be seen, holding the door of the wooden pen, ready to pull it open at the signal.

It was given. Forth rushed A PIG, who, no way terrified at the shouts which attended his appearance, hastened with incredible speed towards the goal; not so the Barony boy, who, at sight of his strange competitor, reared in the air, threatening to unhorse the astonished and discomfited jockey. On came the hog, grunting and sniffing the savoury wash that awaited him, and which his friend and ally, Serjeant Anderson, had, by this time, uncovered. Piggy had made good two-thirds of the distance before the spurs of O'Fogerty, rowel-deep, had urged the frightened courser forward; his rider, hoping yet to overtake his porcine foe, leant forward in true jockey style, using bridle, whip, and spur, with all the dexterity he could muster.

But vain his efforts! the nose of the hungry hog had been for some seconds immersed in the wash, when the career of the rider was checked by his horse stumbling against the trough, and pitching him, over the head of the Barony boy and the curly tail of his rival, into the arms of that portion of the assembled multitude who were luckily behind the winning-post, and who placed him in safety upon the legs he had adorned with a new pair of jockey-boots for this occasion.

Wallace was declared the winner, and the stakes paid on the spot. The wily Scot had taken the opportunity of training his sapient pig at hours

when he knew the officers of both regiments were at mess, and, after making him run for his dainty fare for more than three weeks, had only to keep the animal without food, on the previous day, to insure a super-porcine speed.

Congratulations poured in on the victor on all sides; his Irish friends acknowledged it was "a sporting bet;" whilst his countrymen evinced their joy by carrying the pig round the barracks in triumph, preceded by the pipers of the regiment, who appropriately played "Peggy o' Knock Winnoch," not a few singing Hogg's words to that scarce old air, instead of having to chaunt "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace *bled*," as they might have done had the Caledonian party been obliged to pay the ten guineas staked on these pork chops.

CHAPTER V.

RESOLVED TO ILLUMINATE—FOR CAROLINE—ONLY PRIVILY, IF AT ALL NECESSARY—A CLERK'S ESPRIT DE CORPS—HOW TO LAY OUT A DAUGHTER—UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN—WANTED A SERVANT—FEARS OF PLAYING THE RECRUITING OFFICER—INTENDED ORATORY—UNCALLED FOR DISPLAY—THE FORTUNATE UNHAPPY—DROWNING SORROW—DANCERS.

THE Radicals of Woolwich, most of whom depended on the Government for their existence, made an attempt to force the occupants of the Artillery barracks to illuminate on the occasion of what they deemed the triumph of their idol, Queen Caroline—the abandonment of the Bill of Pains and Penalties; but, in this display of mob arrogance, they were signally defeated.

Some few of the vagabonds, smarting under their failure, scattered themselves about the neighbourhood. Our peaceful vale did not escape; it echoed with cries of "Light up!" "Carylyne for ever!" but neither their shouts nor threats took

effect with me; not a light was visible, though Turner suggested that I might have a bit of rush-light, stuck in clay, placed in the smallest office attached to my dwelling. No longer living *en garçon*, I declined this offer.

The day following the feast of Christmas, I again visited Ivy Cottage; Mr. Leigh, of the Strand, who had succeeded my host's father in business as a bookseller, and who had married his daughter, was, with his wife, of the party. Of course the late trial was the leading topic of conversation, and one gentleman present, whose sentiments were certainly those of a true *John Bull*, kept us in roars of laughter, by his anecdotes and remarks connected with the filthy affair.

Early in the new year (1821) I went to town, to be present at the first representation of *Mirandola*, by "Barry Cornwall." The friends of this popular author mustered strongly; the piece's own merits, both as drama and poem, were aided by appropriate scenery and dresses; still more by the fine acting of Charles Kemble and Macready; but when the latter groaned—

"I want to die!"

Mr. R. Price, who was with me, justly remarked—

"Gloriously dangerous! if they had *come* to *damn* this play, how they would go it *now*!"

Some friends of Mr. Proctor's had called at his office that day, and found only his clerk, who said, consequentially:—

“More than *our* usual engagements fall on *us*, just now, sir. *We* have a tragedy coming out to-night.”

It was at a party given by my friend George Raymond, at his chambers in the Temple, that I first met William Graham. No two men could be more strongly contrasted. Raymond was the very *beau idéal* of the gay Templar of our poets and dramatists, hating the dull routine of the law, preferring Congreve to Blackstone, comedies to the statutes at large, never so happy as when his table was surrounded by his friends, doing the honours with a grace and kindliness of manner that won your warmest regard.

Graham was at first cool, careless, languid — he spoke slowly, but in the purest English, and in the clearest style; he was gifted with the power of oratory in a singular degree, but he was not a man of display. His remarks were made with such quiet, easy, convincing good sense, as to demand attention. *He* also possessed a great love for the drama, but it was the poet as much as the player who gained his praise. Raymond was intimate with Elliston; Graham knew Macready; and it was amusing to listen to the praises bestowed on these

celebrated men by their admirers ; as they unconsciously adopted, in their tone and manner, the accents and bearing of the subjects of their eulogies. Raymond's imitation of Elliston, indeed, was perfect.

One or two more amateur plays having been resolved on, all my dramatic energies were called into action. Not satisfied with studying long parts, both in play and farce, assisting the committee in their various arrangements, and divers other occupations, I also became scene-painter ; and, in conjunction with my friend Charlton, a very clever artist, we repaired, put in order, and repainted, a vast many yards of canvas. Had my existence depended on my labour, I could not have worked harder ; and sometimes my temper was put to the trial, by visits from my brother amateurs, to ask the most trifling questions. I cannot resist giving a specimen.

“ I say, Hill, you know I play a baronet in our next farce ; ought not I to wear some mark of distinction ? Don't you think I might venture on a star at my breast ? ”

“ Certainly not,” was my hasty reply ; “ but if you wish it, you shall have a red hand embroidered on the back part of your white kerseymere smalls.”

Had a country stroller erred thus, his ignorance of “ *les usages de société* ” would have been fair game.

The little blunders, too, that occurred were vastly amusing. One of our set threatened his daughter to "lay her at his corpse a feet." But such a lapsus might have happened to a professed *artiste*.

Though I have heard even amateurs hissed, yet some of our's disappointed the quizzers, who had said, "It would not become gentlemen, who performed for their *own* amusement, to act like common players ; if people wanted to see such, London was near at hand. Audiences should show some *charity* to those who played for one, the worse the better ; they would be sure to make the spectators laugh, and Liston could do no more."

One or two of the most intelligent among our servants were pressed into the cause, as message-carrying supernumeraries. Turner had distinguished himself in that line of business, but now he came to me very importantly, grumbling forth—

"I'm sure, sir, I don't know how you'll manage, for I've been obliged to give up my part to Captain Wylde's man ; my Missis is put to-bed, and I shall be wanted here."

"Very well," said I ; "if the message be delivered, your wife's welcome too—an apology shall be made, and the cause stated."

"Bother !" uttered Turner, then rushed off, blushing at his own familiarity.

I may as well say here that the babe so unfussily produced did *not* prove a squaller — the mother was *out* of the straw in less than a *week*, and I could not find in my heart to break up the establishment.

“The Way to get Married,” and the “Review,” having given great satisfaction, both to actors and audience, and, above all, having filled the coffers of the charity to which the receipts were devoted, “The Wonder” was next determined on.

This pleasant comedy was in the course of rehearsal, and on the eve of representation, when cruel Fate ordained that our crack low comedian, our Liston, Munden, and Emery, rolled into one, was ordered to embark for the West Indies. It was found impossible to obtain, among the amateurs, a substitute for our departing Doctor. Gibby is a character out of the common run, and we were in a state of great uncertainty as to whether or no it would be possible to produce our intended comedy. In this dilemma I called on Yates, and requested his assistance; he cheerfully complied, and I was warmly thanked by my dramatic brethren, for having overcome so formidable an obstacle.

But my troubles were not yet over; the day preceding our performance, I received a letter from Yates, saying that he was too ill to visit us, but

would do his utmost to prevail on Mr. Emery to play the part, and that we should have that gentleman's decision in the course of the following morning.

Never shall I forget the effect this letter produced amongst our squad. It was the first performance in which an opportunity had occurred for antique costume, and many had laid their fair friends under requisition for divers ruffs, collars, sashes, ruffles, plumes, rosettes, &c. &c.; as for myself, I had built a magnificent Spanish habit, and by no means relished the chance of its being condemned to repose in silver paper for an indefinite period.

What was to be done? The ladies—three gifted sisters—Mesdames Orger, Lazenby, and Fawcett, had arrived; we were all letter perfect, but still there was no Gibby. Patience was our only resource, and in its exercise, to the best of our abilities, the day passed. The next morning we assembled at the theatre, few exhibiting any symptoms of hope, many wearing the evidence of despair. As a last resource, I suggested the possibility of the part being read by our indefatigable prompter, little Kenneth; but he honestly confessed that his Cork brogue would so terribly interfere with the Caledonian dialect, it would be impossible for him to place himself in so ridiculous a position.

The post arrived. The drum-major, passing the theatre on his way to the barracks, said there was no letter for me. This was confirmation strong.

“ No play to-night !” sighed Lissardo.

“ Mr. Yates might have written, I think,” muttered Don Frederick.

“ It’s all up with us,” groaned Colonel Briton.

“ ’Tis no use staying here, I see ; I shall be off,” pettishly observed Don Pedro.

At this moment I heard myself inquired for, in a well known voice, and hastening to the speaker, warmly welcomed Mr. Emery, whose name acted like magic on the group. The sun had burst out and dispelled the clouds ; velvet hats and ostrich feathers, that a few moments ago were below par, were now at a premium. I introduced the Professor to the aspirants, and I could not but smile at observing the glances of many of my brother officers at the somewhat remarkable costume of our new and valuable ally. His corduroys and top-boots were of the true Whitechapel character ; the tie of the yellow silk handkerchief, that did duty for a cravat, contrasted strangely with the formal velvet stocks of the bystanders. In spite of his appearance, his warmth of manner, and the readiness with which he went through the rehearsal, kindly initiating us into the mysteries of his art, soon gained him golden opinions.

Our Doctor's name remaining in the bills, it was necessary, previous to the rising of the curtain, to announce the change, and I requested V —, one of the most active of our dramatic committee, to apprize the house how fortunate we had been in obtaining such a valuable auxiliary.

"I don't half like to face the people," he remarked; "at all events I must have my hair curled, and put a little rouge on, before I make my appearance."

Now, whether it was the novelty of the situation, or the consciousness that he was indebted to art for his curls and complexion, that bewildered poor V —, I cannot say; but, instead of congratulating the audience on the opportunity afforded them of witnessing the splendid acting of a most popular actor, he commenced his address by lamenting the absence of Dr. Whitelaw; painted, in very lively colours, the dilemma in which we had been placed; and then, in beseeching terms, implored for the substitute, at least, a kind reception.

Honest *Tyke* would have smiled at this, had he heard it; but, knowing the powers of the gentleman before the curtain, I kept York out of the way till he was wanted.

Common justice to the memory of this great and natural actor here induces me to add, that, understanding the motive of our performance, he

would not accept the slightest *douceur* for his services, returning all but the amount of his coach and tavern expenses, in aid of the charity.

One of those sudden announcements to which military men are subject was made to me just as I had fancied my present quarters likely to be my home for some time. The company to which I belonged was to furnish an officer for recruiting in Ireland, and the adjutant of my battalion kindly consented that the three lieutenants should draw lots for the duty. With a somewhat nervous hand I pulled the slip on which my destiny depended, and was so fortunate as to obtain one of the two prizes. On turning to Barlow to announce this, he observed—

“ You are easily satisfied, Benson ; for, after all, your luck is—*No go.*”

Having promised to pass a day with Mathews, it was arranged that I should witness his “ At Home,” at the Lyceum, and that he would take me to Highgate after the performance. The entertainment was “ Earth, Air, Fire, and Water,” with the “ Polly Packet,” in which I had the pleasure of seeing my friend in the character of Daniel O’Rourke, and hearing him narrate the “ Dream,” given by Major Edgeworth to me, and by me to Mathews, as related in my first work.

Never were audience apparently more delighted,

or more profuse of applause than on this evening, and I was therefore ill prepared to find my friend's countenance unusually gloomy, and his manner lacking that cordiality I had so frequently found. Observing this, I proposed relinquishing my intended visit, but that made him look black as thunder.

"You surely wouldn't think of any thing so unkind? I have set my heart on your being with me, but — of course — if you're otherwise, or better engaged——"

On my assurance that I could not be so pleasantly disposed of as in his society, we entered the carriage; he threw himself into a corner, and remained perfectly silent. On reaching a portion of our road which, from being Macadamised, permitted conversation the more easily, I ventured to inquire—

"Has any thing happened to annoy you this evening? A more delightful or delighted audience I never saw, and you appeared in very first-rate spirits."

"No, nothing has occurred to worry me *to-night*; it must have been this morning before I was up—I am sure of it, I know it, it can be no other than those infernal——" And here he relapsed into silence.

After passing the turnpike, I again essayed to lead him into conversation, and observed that he must often find the road home lonely, although not dangerous, as I believed it was well patrolled.

"And you think *that* renders it safe, do you?

Of course it does — every body says so, except one mistaken individual—clever fellow you are — good soul—I know nothing—I'm nobody—”

“ Poo ! why not tell me what has happened ? ”

“ Why, but mind, don't say a word at the cottage. I want to conceal—to pretend having given away—”

Again he was lost in reverie, and I determined to let him alone, and patiently await the return of his good humour.

At this moment the footfall of a horse was heard, and a figure, well wrapt up in a cloak, as he approached the carriage, signified his propinquity, by giving out, in a deep tone, the announcement of his calling—“ Patrole ! ”

At the same instant, Mathews let down the glass, popped his head out of the carriage, so as nearly to touch the face of the horseman, and, in a tone of the bitterest rage, exclaimed—

“ CHICKENS ! ”

Then, drawing up the glass, he fell back in his corner, saying—

“ Now my mind's easy—if that has not astonished him, I'm no judge ! ”

This was unintelligible to me, and I imagined that the stalwart equestrian might think the craven phrase of my friend somewhat inappropriate to the body of road-side guardians. The *honest* highwayman I feared would doubt the sanity of the carriage traveller who popped forth his head merely to

cry Chickens, and then vanish. Luckily, I can't laugh audibly, and the darkness prevented the visibility of my *ridicibility*. As soon as I could compose my voice, I asked Mathews to explain.

"I'll tell ye," he said; "I had the most beautiful set of bantams I ever beheld, feathered down to their toes — and Mrs. Mathews was very fond of them, and Charles liked them — and every body liked them, but — however, they were stolen this morning, and I feel persuaded that it must be those fellows on horseback, who pretend to protect your property. One of them, that very one, I'll swear, has put all my pretty chickens and their dam into a sack, and sold them in Covent Garden market, before any body but rogues are up in a morning, and it's natural I should be vexed, until I found an opportunity of carrying conviction home to the beast who bagged my birds."

From the moment when he had thus so strangely given vent to his feelings he became an altered man. His conversation was more than usually brilliant—his supposed triumph had quite consoled him for his real loss.

The fact of the robbery was the next day, in spite of Mathews's precautions, discovered. My lady hostess, though not exactly attired in the costume of a hen-wife, paid a visit to the poultry yard, and missed her pets. Great lamentation

followed, but the fortunate arrival of a very agreeable young gentleman, with a name at variance with his age, restored the broken harmony.

The gallery had increased in attraction since my last visit, and Mathews, willing to forget the loss of his cocks and hens, armed himself with a long pole, and excited our hearty laughter by his description of the collection, after the manner of a guide—perpetrating the most ridiculous blunders, as to person, date, and subject.

My late repeated amateuring, my visits to Highgate, had all strengthened my latent love for things theatrical, and I felt it almost a duty to be present at the anniversary dinner of the Covent Garden Fund. Being personally known to many of the stewards, I received greater attention than I could have expected, or indeed deserved; but they almost regarded me as one of themselves, and I was pleased at being so considered.

It is usual on occasions of this sort for the vice-presidents to sit at the table on the *Dais*, and it is expected that some influential persons will occupy the chairs at the heads of the three long tables provided for the guests. More I imagine from ignorance than presumption, Mr. A——, a hatter of Bond Street, sat himself down in the seat of honour at the table at which I dined.

Some son of mischief, who must be nameless,

secretly sent a card to Mr. A——, with whom he was not acquainted, nor did that gentleman know from whom it came; on it was penciled, “As H. R. H. the Duke of Sussex intends proposing Mr. A——’s health, a friend thinks it right to prepare him for returning thanks, &c. &c.”

The good man could no longer attend to the songs, the bottle, the speeches, for thinking of his own; as he mentally concocted this oration, his lips moved inaudibly; to hold forth in presence of royalty! it was an appalling responsibility. Yet it may be doubted whether his relief was unqualified by disappointment, when the evening concluded without his having been called on for this great effort; perhaps he suspected the hoax, perhaps he left the hall contemning the short memories of princes.

Our last amateur play was announced. Whilst at rehearsal, intelligence reached us that a boat, containing a small party of our men, crossing the Thames for an out quarter, had been upset and four poor fellows drowned, leaving wives and children behind them. This accident was a fair pretext for again covering our multitude of sins, and a performance was agreed on, the receipts of which were to be given to the husbandless and fatherless. V—— had been so quizzed by Barlow and others for soliciting favour for Emery, that he refused ever to face the lamps again, but

K—— volunteered for the office of “giving out” the intended play. We were no way alarmed on the score of *his* diffidence, and only hoped that he would state briefly and effectively the reason why we again ventured to

“Strut and fret our hour on the stage,”

and then positively to be heard no more.

At the close of the comedy out stepped our Demosthenes, and thus he spoke—

“Gentlemen and ladies ! I have the pleasure to inform — you — will, I am sure, be glad to hear—that, in consequence of a late opportune affair — in short, there is a little story attached to it !—another night’s entertainment will be given — to the surviving widows of some gunners of our’s — whose drowning has accidentally left their orphans to rely on your usual indulgence—as we do on your support and patronage—at their approaching benefit.”

Considering the tragic cause of the address, never did speech excite more genuine mirth, for the manner was as ridiculous as the matter.

Our regimental balls were crack things, but I was no votary to St. Vitus, I had not been bitten by a Tarantula. There was a lame dandy Scotsman of the Engineers, who looked like Coleridge’s

“ One *red* leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can ;”

in fact, he “ would dance all night,” though on the same conditions as Young’s Lemira.

A worthier candidate for the favours of Terpsichore was that prodigious exquisite S——. One very cold night, when a warming crowd was expected to tickle the senseless floor of the mess-room, he ran to me, dressed for conquest, asking if I would scent his cambric kerchief for him. I promised, took it from the room with me, and, on re-presenting it tightly folded, bade him keep it so till most wanted, as the perfume I had used was very volatile, and would escape as soon as exposed to the air.

All thanks and compliance, he rushed to the scene of action, and not till he had secured a partner, whose heart he hoped to lead by the nose, did he draw forth my charm. What was his amaze, and her disgust, when from it reeked the odour of the strongest possible garlick vinegar ! For some time “ the handkerchief ” was as unwelcome and irritating a theme between this pair as erst betwixt the Moor and Desdemona.

CHAPTER VI.

IRISH IN FRANCE — LOUIS THE FOURTEENTH — JAMES THE SECOND — LOVE AND DEBT — A WOMAN — A PRIEST — A RING, AND ITS GUARD — SOVEREIGN BORROWING — THE BALL — BARGAIN DRIVING — DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

OUR theatrical display had called into requisition all the valuable rings and brooches of my friends, but they frequently found that the hired foil-stones, which looked so trumpery by day, told out more effectively at night than did their real jewels.

This war between false and true elicited an anecdote from Barlow, on which I have since founded a story, changing time, place, and names, to avoid personality.

“Awake, master, dear, and hearken to the bad news I’ll be telling you,” were the first sounds that broke on the slumber of Gerald O’Donnel, one bleak November morning, as he lay on his somewhat circumscribed couch, in a small apartment of the *Caserne* at St. Germain.

“ Who’s that ? ” cried the young soldier, starting up, and shaking off the stout arm which had been applied to his shoulder. “ Who is it but meself, your own Lanty M’Carthy, that has made so bould as to rouse you, that you may get out of this, with speed.”

“ *Mille diables !* what fool’s errand are you come on now ? ”

“ Whist ! master darlint, or they’ll hear us colloguing, and enter without sans ceremonie.”

“ Folly ! — the Grand Monarque, Louis the Superb, or my own King James, could not break in on the privacy of an officer of the Irish Brigade.”

“ Much them devils below cares if you were the commander of his Holiness the Pope’s army ; they’d walk in, and make you walk out, and away wid you to that sweet place they call the consurgery. I wonder which of the blagards that you dealt with in Paris, and sartainly we left in such a hurry I hadn’t time to go and settle wid ’em, even if you’d had the means, so the fault was in the suddent order we got, and not your’s ; — I wonder which of them has demaned himself by sending civil officers to take the body of one of the Bodyguards ? ”

“ M’Carthy, we must manage to avoid them to-day, at all hazards ; it is my tour of duty at the

palace, and to be absent from my post would cost me my commission."

"Och, then good 'look to them chaps, serjeants as they call themselves! you're safe, my jewel, for the next four-and-twenty hours, any way; they can't take you whilst on King's guard, so I'll lead them off the scent, whilst you get drest, and make the best of your way to the parade. Oncet there, and I'd like to see the murthering villian of a cateh-pole that would dar put the tip of his ill-lookin little finger on the fringe of your epaulette!"

Away hurried the faithful Lanty to mislead the myrmidons of the law, and as he belonged to a nation celebrated, in a thousand stories, for bothering bailiffs, his master was enabled to reach the parade ground without interruption.

O'Donnel was a cadet of one of the oldest families in Ireland. Their adherenec in the eause of James had deprived them of their paternal aeres; the head of the house, Sir Theophilus, after witnessing the fall of two of his sons on the memorable battle field near Boyne Water, had followed his exiled master to France, and, unable to support his youngest boy, had gladly accepted for him a commission in the Irish Brigade, and shortly after sought a refuge from worldly cares in the monastery of St. Denis. Better would it have been had he watched over his high-spirited son, who, with all

the impetuosity of youth, soon involved himself in debt in "the good city of Paris." His handsome person and gaiety of manner easily obtained credit from divers tailors, cutlers, hatters, plumassiers, glovers, &c. Little did he dream, or little did he heed, that these obliging Messieurs, who protested that "they were only too much honoured in receiving the commands of such a *beau garçon* as *the O'Donnel*," would ever become inexorable duns, and so attached to their gallant cavalier, as to desire to have him in safe custody, that they might occasionally gratify their eyes by peeping at the fine bird, in *their* fine feathers, through the bars of his stone cage.

There was an air of triumph in his look and step, as O'Donnel marched his men to the *corps de garde*, that attracted the notice of many of the spectators, who had assembled, as was usual, at the parade hour. None knew the cause of this excitement, or guessed that this proud look could be humbled at the same hour, on the following morning, by a scurvy *huissier*.

Left to himself, he struggled to shake off the painful thoughts attendant on his situation, and gladly caught at any object likely to divert him from contemplating the degrading fate his past imprudence threatened. The arrival of a cumbersome *calèche*, which drew up at a small door near the grand en-

trance of the palace, could not fail in his present mood to attract his attention ; but when he beheld descend from the carriage a lovely girl, whom he had seen at a ball given by Louis XIV. in honour of James's birth-day, he hastened towards the spot, to gaze upon that beauteous face which had so often appeared to him in his dreams.

An old man, muffled in a *roquelaurc*, observing the advance of O'Donnel, drew the arm of his fair charge through his own, and hurried toward the postern ; but, ere they disappeared, a glance from a pair of brilliant eyes went to the heart of the young Irishman, and left him transfixed to the spot, gazing after this conquering fair, as though his looks could pierce the solid carve-work of the oaken door ; how long he would have retained this statue-like position it is impossible to tell ; fortunately the cry of "*Aux armes !*" roused him from his trance, and he hastened to tender military honours to his exiled King, who, attended by one gentleman only, left the palace on foot.

For many an hour the fair form O'Donnel had gazed on banished from his thoughts the dreaded morrow ; so absorbed, indeed, was he in delicious reveries, as to be scarcely conscious of the entrance of Lanty, and the various preparations he made for " the master's dinner."

" Shure and I thought I'd never get shut of them

devils incarnate, but lave me alone in the long run."

"Oh, those eyes!" sighed O'Donnel.

"By me soul, you may say that! I'll engage they'll not be able to see out of them till day's dawn to-morrow, for I've sewed 'em up!"

"And what a form—!"

"They're both lying on the same form, at the caberay where I gave them the treat."

"And such a foot!"

"By Jagurs, but I got the length of it, any way," continued Lanty; "there now, I'll engage there's as pretty a guard-room dinner as heart can desire. A nice tureen of potage de ver, solfrit, and a rotee, whither it's made of beef or pig meself don't know, but I'll engage it smells elegant!"

"Charmante fillette!" sighed O'Donnel.

"Is it a fillet of veal?" asked Lanty. "Ah now, sit down and try!"

"I've no appetite," languidly answered the stricken deer, "after such a feast!"

"Och then, the devil a mouthful you've tasted this blissed day, for to my sartain knowledge we hadn't the vally of a tas de caffey, or a petty pang in the house; but here, the dinner's purvided by the noble Louis, he ought to have been born in ould Ireland for that same ginerous notion. Musha what ails you, master dear? take your nourishment;" and he poured out a bumper of Hermitage, "that's

a fine glass of wine, I'll be bail, and will cheer your heart; pitch sorrow to ould Scratch, and don't think of them two."

"I can think of nothing else—one of them, at least."

"You're mighty particular, any way : och, I see, sure you mane the principal, and don't care for the follower ; but your soup's cooling."

With a sigh deep enough to make a furnace ashamed of itself, the unhappy O'Donnell took his seat, and, for a man over head and ears in debt, and steeped from crown to sole in love, contrived to make a very tolerable dinner, Lanty plying him with generous wine, and saying, with a look of delight—

"Two bottles is the riglar allowance, but I persuaded the mayter d'otel to let me have an extra one, that I may make you a cup of spiced drink the last thing at night, to prevint you draiming about those you don't want to think on ; so Master Gerald dear, though I'll clear away and lave you, don't be in Oh dyssyspwar while your're vissy vee by yourself, but drink your wine, whilst I go look after them sleeping beauties, the curse o'Crummell on their karkishes !"

The shades of evening fell on the palace of St. Germain's ; O'Donnell had drawn his chair close to the rude hearth, watching the crackling logs, and thinking on those bright eyes whose fire had proved

so dangerous to his peace, when Lanty re-appeared with a face of bewilderment and mystery, whispering to his master—

“ There’s one without that has call to spake to your honour, says it’s on pressing business, and only to yourself.”

“ Is it man or woman ?” demanded O’Donnel, with some undefined hope springing to his heart.

“ Why then, it’s nayther the one nor the other, for by the same token it’s a friar.”

“ May be a message from my father, or perhaps some half-starved monk craving charity — Lanty, admit the poor devil.”

“ The holy father is any thing but starved, an please your honour, by the size of his girdle, but you shall judge for yourself.” Lanty opened the door, continuing, “ Step this way, your riv’rence, the master will have speech wid you.”

A tall and burly figure, clothed in the habit of the Franciscan order, advanced towards O’Donnel, and throwing back his cowl, exhibited a face redolent of good humour and good living ; there was no trace of fast or penance upon its round oily surface, a tint of crimson spread over his capacious cheeks and hanging jowl, whilst the deeper hue of the mulberry invaded a nose somewhat resembling, in shape, the fruit from which the colour seemed derived.

“Benedicite, my son!” said the fat churchman,
“I crave a short audience with you.”

O'Donnel signed for Lanty to retire.

“Is it meself, such a night as this, to lave you widout something to drink? Shure the holy father would like the least taste in life, to keep the could from the heart of him, whilst he's discoorsing wid you.”

Speedily he placed on table the cheering beverage, saying—

“Shure, didn't I tould you, the extrey bottle would be convanient?” and left his master to learn the tidings the priest had to communicate.

“My son,” said the friar, with an air of mock solemnity, as he filled his glass, “you are blest in a servant—a religious turn of mind can never be better evinced than by a consideration for the comforts of the elergy.” After taking a lengthened draught, he continued, “I am but a few days from our dear island, and have made this visit at the express desire of the jovial, open-hearted, hospitable Lady Honoria, now with the saints.”

“Dear old aunt Norah dead!” sighed Gerald, smiling through tears at her pleasant image—“Then my father and myself are all now left upon this earth of the once powerful house of O'Donnel.”

“Cheer up, my son, in you that house will revive; for you look, to say the least, a marrying man; but listen—your aunt intrusted me to deliver

to you these two packets ; the one contains a small bequest in gold, good soul ! 'twas all she could save or spare after her donations to holy church ; and the other, the only vestige left of the former glories of your race, the large diamond ring, which has for centuries been the ornament of the O'Donnell family, and which she, with much risk, secured about her own person, when the house of her fathers was given up to pillage, to those children of Sathan, the followers of Orange William. ' Tell Gerald,' were her parting words, ' to guard this ring in memory of days gone by.' "

" Her injunction shall be obeyed," said the young soldier, placing his hand affectionately on the casket, containing this unexpected treasure.

" My son," said the friar, " I now go to seek his sacred Majesty, with news from Ireland that will joy his heart. William of Nassau will not long usurp the seat of the anointed James Stuart. My mission to you is fulfilled, but my glass is *not*."

Replenishing his goblet, the friar drained it with a parting blessing to his countryman, and took his leave.

" Surely never did money arrive more apropos : my debts in Paris do not exceed a hundred and seventy louis-d'or, and my poor aunt's supply amounts to a couple of hundred ; and then this ring,

it is indeed magnificent, and doubtless of great value. I'll wear it the moment I've paid those harpies. I'll wear it under *her* window to-morrow ; they say there is an attraction in diamonds that ladies seldom resist."

Such were the cogitations of O'Donnel, whose heart was lightened of a load of care.

Lanty was half frantic when he learned his master's unexpected good fortune, called on all the saints in the calendar to bless the Lady Honoria ; and before the turret clock struck eight on the following morning, had set off to Paris, in company with his troublesome friends of yesterday, empowered by his master to arrange the various claims existing against him.

O'Donnel, relieved from his duty, devoted more than usual attention to his toilet, and, spite of the absence of his *valet de chambre*, sallied forth for a promenade in his best suit, his newest plume, and his easiest gauntlets ; these he preferred, as he could not resist the pleasure of occasionally pulling off the left hand glove, to contemplate the sparkling ornament that adorned his little finger.

Defying the sharp air, and unwilling to conceal his finely formed figure in a cloak, O'Donnel paced up and down in front of the apartment he imagined to be occupied by the enslaver of his heart, but not a glimpse of her could he obtain. Still he per-

severed in confining his walk to this portion of the terrace, and was somewhat annoyed at having his solitary saunter 'broken upon by a party of his brother officers, who joined him. After exchanging the salutations, without which, in those days, friends could not meet, the new comers expressed their surprise at finding him so near the guard-room, after having been condemned to pass the last four-and-twenty hours within its walls. He did not deign to comment on their various conjectures at his selection of so dull a *quartier*, but with a natural and pardonable vanity accepted a proffered *prise de tabac* for the express purpose of dazzling the eyes of his comrades. No sooner did the pure water of this splendid *bague* glisten in the wintry sunbeams, than various exclamations of astonishment burst from the lips of his brother soldiers.

"Superbe!" "Magnifique!" "Lucky fellow!" "Won at play?" "A woman's cadcau?" "Plunder?" were the interjections and interrogations that beset him.

"*Ni l'une ni l'autre*," said O'Donnel, with an air of nonchalance, "part of my family jewels," and walked away.

"He'd better pay that poor devil, Monsieur Dechet, the *marchand des gands*, in the Palais Royal," said one of the group, "than strut about with his '*family jewels*.'"

"Or get a decent chair or two, and a spare

table, put into his quarters ; the old ones have been burnt for lack of the price of fuel, and all that he may be better dressed than the rest of us. Such vanity and misery, forsooth !”

These, and similar remarks followed the departure of our hero. Fortunately for the speakers they did not reach the subject of them, or they would have learned that he was the last man breathing who would suffer his name and character to be made a theme for levity ; though having now the power to tell his accidental, unintentional, and unconscious slanderers, “ By this time, gentlemen, my rascally creditors are all satisfied ” — he might have contented himself with cautioning his friends not to meddle with his affairs in future. Their observations overheard the day before *must* have been *punished*, for *then* they would have been *unpardonably true*.

Before sunset the honest Lanty returned from the capital, having executed his mission ; he recounted to his master how completely he had astonished the various tradesmen by his voluntary discharge of debts they had feared could only be recovered by legal process.

It was whilst rendering an account of his stewardship that the eyes of the faithful domestic first fell upon the diamond ring.

“ Saints preserve us ! Master jewel, but that is

a magnificent *bag*. I'll engage Lewy Catose hasn't got such a one to wear on high days and holidays and bonfire nights; hut och, what a thing it would be, if by bad luck you were to lose it, or have it stolen from you, either by man or woman! My heart would break at such a misfortunate loss. Get a big iron box, Master Gerald, and lock it up, as though 'twas the apple of your eye—or—I have a scheme that will presarve it from harm's way, if you'll take a fool's advice."

"Out with it, Lanty!"

"Get one made as like it as one pea is to the other, only of false stones, and you can wear the rale thing by day, and the substitution at night. Devil a one will ever diskiver the differ; besides, you may be pushed for the ready coin some day, and you can raise a big sum upon that beauty, and yet make the world belave that 'tis still on the finger of ye."

Lanty so harped upon the expediency of having a fac-simile ring made, that his master acceded to the proposition, and sent the original to Paris for that purpose.

The next day found him traversing the terrace, full of the hope that he should get a glimpse of his charmer, but the same ill-fortune befel him as before; she was invisible. Day succeeded day, and

still he failed in obtaining another sight of her whose image haunted his thoughts.

In due time his ring and its double reached him, the imitation was admirable, and the literal Lanty, on hearing his master express his satisfaction at the paste counterfeit, said —

“ I wonder was it by baking or boiling they found out the knack of making such sparkling stones out of flour and water ? ”

The palace clock had chimed six, and Lanty was puzzling his brain with various conjectures as to what could detain his master so long from his dinner, when Gerald entered his barrack-room, his countenance bearing evidence of some recent excitement.

“ Musha then, 'tis meself that is glad to see you safe back this dark evening — but what ails you entirely ? Something has happened to you, and oh, holy Paul, the ring's not on your finger ; tell me, master, what's gone of it, and what's come of you, that your cheeks are like damask roses, and your eyes glisten like — what's lost for ever, I'm thinking.”

“ Fear nothing, Lanty, you shall know all. I was sauntering in the forest this morning, tempted by the clear sky and frosty air, when I encountered his Majesty, alone ; he greeted me with the most gracious condescension, and signified his pleasure to

speak on a matter of some moment. It appears that the good Father who brought me the late news from Ireland, has given such details to the Royal James as renders the return of the Friar an object of the greatest consequence, but one obstacle prevented — the limited means of the Monarch did not enable him to despatch the Priest on this important mission, and his Majesty, in lamenting the state of his coffers, without reserve inquired if I could devise some means to assist him in this emergency. Lanty, I have lent King James my ring.”

“ You’d better say gave, Master Gerald, for sorrow the sight you’ll ever get of it again.”

“ Pshaw ! I have the sacred promise of James, that, as soon as Louis opens his treasury in his behalf, it shall be restored ; and, as a proof of especial favour, I have received a command to attend his Majesty this evening.”

“ The laste he could do, I’m thinking ; you’ll get a petty soupy, or, may be, only a bisky and a glass of Osacray, for what was worth a hundred million of Ecuses.”

Our young Hibernian was received with unusual distinction by the Monarch he had served. A brilliant assemblage filled the suite of rooms, and as O’Donnel surveyed the various groupes, he saw the face of her he had so often sought in vain. The especial notice bestowed on him by the King in-

duced the nobleman, who acted as Chamberlain, in the little court of St. Germain, to proffer his services, should they be required, to obtain O'Donnell a partner for the dance, which would shortly commence. Gerald eagerly inquired if his new friend knew the name of the lady leaning on the arm of an old gentleman of most forbidding aspect, and learnt that she was the niece of Monsieur Fernet, one of Louis XIV.'s private bankers; that Mademoiselle Angelique was well known to the Chamberlain, and that he would introduce O'Donnell to her for the first cotillon.

This was beyond the lover's most sanguine expectation. The beauteous Angelique was led to the *salon de danse* by the enraptured soldier, and whether or no gratitude interfered with justice in the decision of James, as far as the cavalier was concerned, we cannot determine, but Gerald and Angelique were declared the handsomest couple in the assembly.

We shall not attempt a description of what passed between the young people; we need scarcely say that O'Donnell, being an Irishman, made the best of his time, and that the fair Angelique, without confessing that she had surrendered the citadel of her heart to the gallant besieger, permitted his applying to her uncle for an entrée at their house,

where he might try his chance of winning her favour.

Gerald was not the man to let a purpose cool ; the following morning found him in the apartment of the banker ; a passionate avowal of his love, and demand of leave to address Angelique, was received with the same cold blank look by the man of wealth as though two hearts were not concerned in the affair.

“ Monsieur O'Donnel,” said the banker, “ a Lieutenant in the Irish Brigade, whose only wealth consists in a ring of some inconsiderable value, is not the match for my niece. I am surprised that you retain that bauble, learning, as I have done, that you are, or have been encumbered with debt. Should you ever feel disposed to part with it, perhaps you will permit me to become the purchaser ; but on the other subject I must decline communication with you.”

“ Will you not allow me to receive my dismissal from Ma'amselle Angelique ? surely she should be the party to crush my hopes, and not you.”

“ Ma'amselle Angelique is a giddy girl, her fortune is at her own disposal, 'tis true — that is” — he added, endeavouring to withdraw so important an admission — “ that is, when she comes of age — and with my consent ; besides, her respect for my judgment and knowledge of the world would

at all times induce her to consult my wishes on a matter of consequence. However, to change the subject — I've taken a fancy to your ring."

"Pshaw!" said O'Donnel, irritated by the manner of Fernet; "why talk about such a thing as this, when a jewel beyond price is what I seek to possess?"

"Once more, pray let me beg your silence on that theme; for the rest, a thousand crowns must be of more value to you than a mere toy; at that price it is mine."

"That price," rejoined O'Donnel, "were about as much too low for the diamond this *appears*, as it is too high for *paste*."

"Paste, indeed," echoed old Fernet; "come, come, I happen to know better. Why, King James wanted me to advance him a certain sum on that identical ring, but I never lend even on such terms."

"Well," laughed Gerald, "you may be a better lapidary than either his Majesty or myself; of course we know that no one would suspect *him* of an attempt to raise money on a paste ring—yet, if you really believed this *diamond*, why did you refuse the royal request? and why do you now offer me so mean a sum?"

"Perhaps," drily retorted the banker, "to bribe you out of your silly suit to my niece."

“ You would fail, then, if you forced a diamond mine on me, in exchange for this — *paste* ring.”

“ Ha, ha,” snickered Fernet, “ you adhere to that story, fearful of being robbed of your only treasure ; trust me, it will be safer in my custody.”

“ At least, *you* will not rob me of it, if you pay one thousand crowns.”

“ Which I will do,” promptly answered the *millionaire*, eager to overreach this *inconsequent* ; he seized a pen, and wrote, adding, “ Give me your *paste*, and this order on my house in Paris is your’s.”

“ My servant waits without, let him and one of your people witness the transaction,” said O’Donnel, gravely.

“ With pleasure,” sniggered Fernet, calling in a clerk devoted to his interest, at the same moment that Gerald summoned Lanty.

“ Here, Lucas,” said the banker, “ I give Monsieur O’Donnel one thousand crowns for the ring of which I told you.”

The man smiled his felicitations at his master.

“ Which *I* say is *paste*, Lanty,” firmly uttered Gerald.

“ Mark that, Mounseers,” cried Lanty ; “ divil a harm to the master’s cha-*racter*, if he takes the *gould now* — though ’t isn’t as much as I’d say by his as offers, if the thing *should* be rale.”

"That's my affair," said Fernet.

"*Bien*," added Gerald, mischievously; "then let grasping obstinacy find out the mistake at leisure."

"When *I* call it paste," concluded Fernet, hastily withdrawing the ring from our soldier's finger, "then you may claim my niece and her dower, sir; take my order—Lucas, I have made a bargain!"

"May you always be as content with it as I am!" said O'Donnel; and pocketing the order, he walked away—followed by the exultant Macarthy.

That very evening Gerald was again sent for by the King. Louis, learning the straight into which his royal brother had been driven, had gently chidden him for not having applied to the friendship of France, and forced on him an addition to his usual allowance, which enabled James at once to reclaim and return the O'Donnel ring.

Next day, Gerald, again chatting with his fellow soldiers, was joined by old Fernet—our hero, aside, and in English, bade one of his friends rally him on the loss of his ring.

"Ha," commented the banker, rubbing his hands, "that diamond Lucas has taken to a Paris jeweller, from whom I expect every moment to receive *rather more* than I gave you, *Monsieur*."

"More or less," said O'Donnel; "I told you it was paste."

“ You did, knowing no better.”

“ Knowing, at least, that *this* answers my purpose quite as well,” said the young soldier, withdrawing his glove.

“ *Diable !*” exclaimed Fernet ; “ two rings exactly alike ?”

“ In all but value,” quoth Gerald ; “ one for my King and myself, the other for Monsieur Fernet ; and, considering the obligations under which his manner of receiving my proposal for his niece has laid me, it is natural to conclude that I should part with my *family* jewel to *him* for a *third* of its worth, with pleasure. The amount he offered did credit to his integrity ; he scorns to take advantage of a brave man’s poverty, at the very moment when he is baffling that man’s dearest hopes.”

“ What mean you ?” demanded Fernet ; but ere Gerald could reply, Lucas, on his way home, and closely followed by Lanty, accosted his master with —

“ Oh, Monsieur, you have been insulted in my person, by that accursed jeweller ; he says the ring is—”

“ Paste,” chorused Gerald, Lanty, and the bevy of officers.

“ Paste ?” repeated the dismayed Avaro.

“ Yes, paste !” articulated Lucas.

“ Bless me !” said Gerald, coolly ; “ were you young, and a man of rank, sir, I ought to take satisfaction for this doubt of my word, given you before two witnesses. As it is, I suppose you know that your attempt at — I may call it — defrauding me of my diamond, here, has placed *your* reputation entirely at *my* mercy.”

“ That it has !” chimed in the O'Donnellites.

“ Och, the negur !” shouted Lanty, “ cotched in his own trap.”

“ Of course,” continued Gerald, “ I shall feel it my duty to apprise both our sovereigns of the facts, lest they should imagine *me* capable of passing counterfeits. It will be nothing new for a grey *negociant*, a *marchand* to have attempted a miserly transaction ; but the name of an officer of the Irish Brigade must not suffer unjustly.”

“ Certainly not,” coincided Gerald's amused compeers, while Fernet and Lucas stood

“ Meet statues for the Court of Fear.”

“ It *is* paste, then,” sighed the aged man.

“ If you admit that,” took up the lover, “ you know what follows : you said before your own man and mine, that when *you* called it so I might claim your niece and her dower.”

“ You did that, ould Jew—as I am ready to testify,” said Lanty.

“ Poo,” cried one of Gerald's friends, “ the

canaille care nothing for breaking their words ; if they were men of honour, no witnesses were needed."

" Monsieur O'Donnell," pleaded Fernct, attempting to laugh, " I own that—even in your candour you have been too deep for me—honesty, it seems, is the best policy, after all. I assure you my only wish was to procure, at the highest sum I could afford, a present fit for my dear Angelique—what I have purchased of you is unworthy of her acceptance."

" Oh, sir," said Gerald, " this statement accords but ill with that of your having striven to sell the ring. Its original shall be Angelique's when she is mine ; pray wear the copy yourself, for my sake."

The merriment of the juvenile hearers was now so boisterous that the uncle was fain to retreat, leaning on the arm of the lover—and hoped to hush up a story so little to his own advantage, by bestowing Angelique and her fortune on the gallant son of Erin ; but no sooner was she the " fast married" Madame O'Donnell, than Lanty, and wags of a higher grade, including Louis XIV. himself, revived the tale, to the constant annoyance of Monsieur Fernet, who, to his dying day, had to bear the sobriquet of THE DIAMOND MERCHANT.

CHAPTER VII.

TURN HER OUT—A SHAKSPERIAN TREAT—"MR. GREEN, FROM THE CITY"—A FANCY DRESS IS A CROWN TO ITS WEARER—LET IT BE CHANGED—THE MOURNER—HAVING A CALL—DOUBTS OF MY OWN IDENTITY—TOO FAR NORTH—PLAYING AULD NICK—ENJOYING THE FRUITS OF IT.

BUT to return to our own times. The feeling awakened in behalf of our poor men's families was so great as to insure us a crowded audience, and our theatrical exertions terminated most brilliantly.

It was about the middle of the month of May, that, being in town, I resolved on visiting Covent Garden Theatre. My face was pretty well known to the boxkeepers, one of whom I asked for a front seat, near the stage. He looked at his list, and told me the two front rows of the stage-box were taken by a Mrs. White, but he could give me a place in the next. The first act was just ending, when the stage-box door was opened, with the usual announcement of "Company!" I saw a stout female stride over the benches, and take her seat close to the proscenium pilaster. I did not, at

first, look at her face, as her head-dress attracted my attention; a white satin hat, with a plume of three white ostrich feathers on one side, and three scarlet on the other. She was followed by two male friends and one female.

Scarcely a moment elapsed, after the arrival of this party, ere a voice from the *gallery* roared out "The Queen! Queen!" This rallying word of disloyalty and scoundrelism was taken up by a few "sweet voices"—but, the Brandyburgh bubble had burst! "Unsunned snow" was found to be very unsavoury mud. The scream at sight of Theodore, and the fainting Flyn, had not been lost upon the public. "God save the King" was called for, and the name of the monarch strongly accentuated; at the conclusion of the anthem, cries arose in the pit of—

"Go home, ma'am! you're drunk! Go to Billy Austin! Where's Bergami?"

Some expressions were used which I shall not repeat, but which the wretched woman had drawn upon herself. She endeavoured to face the storm; it would not do; the groans and hisses redoubled; at last she rose, and made a hasty retreat: her exit was hailed by a loud hurrah. God save the King was again sung with the most unequivocal marks of devotion to his person, and the entertainments proceeded as though no such event had occurred.

At a Blackheath ball I was introduced to a gentleman who invited me to visit his father's picture gallery, and speedily I availed myself of his politeness. I was little prepared for the treat afforded me. The best pictures from the celebrated Shakspeare gallery, instituted by that patron of English art, Alderman Boydell, were here collected.

The worthy proprietor—a portly, noble looking, elderly man, who acted as guide—boasted, with honest exultation, that he had entertained most of the Royal Academicians at his board. With him, West, Fuseli, Northcott, Barry, Opie, and Louthenbourg were “household words.” I was charmed at the unaffected candour with which he would quote their opinions, not as spontaneously his—in a style highly creditable, not only to his verbal memory's retentiveness, but his deferential appreciation of every syllable *there* uttered by his superiors in genius; he said that he had loved pictures, but was no judge of them; when he began to purchase, his friends the painters had given him some taste, In one instance he ran into rather a singular extreme. Shewing us a miniature of his daughter, not saying whether the lady was absent, altered, dead or dear, he expressed his extreme value for it. My sister naturally observed—

“I conclude, then, it must be a very faithful likeness.”

“ Few people think that, Miss,” admitted Mr. Green, “ but look at the finish — the execution ! ’tis done by the celebrated Ozias Humphreys.”

Refreshments, including the choicest wines and fruits, were brought to us, and his female guest presented with a bouquet of exotics, ere we took our departure. All this told well for our host’s paternal feelings too ; we were only known to him as sent by his very amiable son.

To the honour and glory of old England, that “ nation of shopkeepers,” as the envious Corsican pleased to call us, the proprietor of this gallery was neither more nor less than a tea-dealer in Gracechurch Street. Show me any country in the world that can produce such princely merchants as our own dear little island ! ’Tis true many splendid accumulations of painting and sculpture were to be found in France, but they were the property of military chiefs, who disgraced the name of soldiers by the acts of brigands ; plunder has enabled our French neighbours to boast of collections ; the wealth acquired by enterprize, honest industry, and a desire to promote native talent, had been the foundation of this truly English gallery.

If I remember rightly, it was Lord Ligonier, who, when Master-General of the Ordnance, issued a *request* in the orderly book, “ that the Officers of Artillery would be so good as to mount guard in

their uniform." In after times it was considered necessary to be attired regimentally, both on and off guard. The only man in the garrison who was desirous of sporting a fancy costume, instead of the becoming dress of the Horse Brigade, was George B——. A white jacket, with blue facings, no lace or any mark of distinction, except a staff hat and willow plume, he imagined could not fail to attract the eyes of the fair, as he cantered about the neighbourhood; and he adopted this singular dress at the expence of considerable bantering and quizzing by the officers of his troop.

George B—— had called one morning to pay a visit of condolence to the Brigade Major, when a servant brought word that a party below stairs requested a pass to see the Arsenal, sending up their cards, in proof of their respectability. Lloyd, after glancing at the pasteboard, which bore addresses in Finsbury Square, Lothbury, and other similar quarters of the city, asked George to write the pass, and he would sign it. This done, B——, who was in the main a good-natured fellow, ran down stairs to give it to the applicants. A burly man, perhaps Deputy of a ward, or may be—

"Knight, Alderman and Colonel of the Yellow!"

received the paper, and slipping a crown piece into George's hand, said—

“Thank you, young man, there’s a trifle for your civility.”

B——, who was a scion of nobility, (I forget on which side the blanket) was as turned to stone by the magic power of the *tip*; he stood speechless, wonder-struck, at the extraordinary mistake committed by the citizen — ere he recovered himself the party were out of sight, and he returned to Lloyd in a state of utter bewilderment. To be mistaken for an orderly, to have a dollar *slipped* into his hand, by a man who kept a shop — it was too much! — what event would happen next? the Millenium must be at hand!

The invalid enjoyed the perturbation of poor George, who most unguardedly related what had befallen him to some of his intimates, little imagining the unmerciful use they would make of his confidence. One would slip a penny piece into his hand, saying—

“There’s something for your civility, young man.”

Another would stop and ask if he would be good enough to get him a pass to see the Arsenal? a third would call after him, “Orderly!” and, to crown all, Smith, of the Drivers, provokingly remarked—

“Well, I’m neither handsome nor high-born, but I flatter myself that nobody could tip me for

an Orderly. By Jingo, B——, you will make a fine income out of that disguise.”

All this George bore with great patience, but still continued to sport the dress which had been the origin of the citizen's blunder; at length some friend pointed out the absurdity of his adopting such a habit, and assured him that, as long as he wore it, he would be liable to be mistaken for “any thing but a gentleman”—the white jacket was therefore reluctantly laid aside.

On the 4th of July the news from St. Helena created as great a sensation in our garrison as in any other part of Europe. Napoleon, the mighty Eagle, had expired in his rocky prison. So many gallant fellows were congregated, who had fought against this great child of fortune, in various memorable fields, it was not to be wondered at that little else was talked of, but the extraordinary history of the man who, from “a Lieutenant of Artillery,” became the arbiter of Europe's fate, saving and excepting that atom of her, our own dear England.

Being somewhat of a relic-hunter, I certainly envied a Captain of our's, who, on board the Northumberland, had often the honour of playing at Whist with the illustrious captive, and, on one occasion, won from him four points. These coins, bearing the name and effigy of his card

antagonist, he has, I understand, carefully preserved, with an inscription engraved on the rims, “ Won of the Emperor at whist, by ——,” with his name and the date.

Calling on a valued friend in Gray’s Inn a day or two afterwards, I was somewhat shocked to perceive him attired in mourning, and hastily demanded if he had lost any of the branches of his family that were known to me ; without saying a word, with a solemn air, he led me to the door of his inner chamber. The curtains were closed ; a dim, religious light pervaded the apartment. At the extreme end I observed a couch, on which, at first sight, nothing but white draperies were visible, by the light of wax-tapers placed at the head. Laying his finger on his lip, my friend led me closer to this funereal arrangement, and I beheld the *marble* countenance of the deceased Emperor, reposing on a pillow, the sheets and counterpane so arranged as to convey the idea that they covered a body.

“ There is the friend I mourn ! ” said the eccentric ; “ kneel with me, and pray for the repose of his soul.”

This was said with such extreme gravity, that I began to entertain fears for my friend’s sanity ; I determined, however, to humour him, and preserved the utmost decorum. The mourner rose

from the side of the couch, threw open a curtain, and said —

“ I knew you were coming, so prepared this effigy for your express gratification. I think Bertrand himself, sir, could not have done it better. I wish my friend Robert William Elliston could see these solemn rites. His tears would flow copiously — But, to change the melancholy theme, will you stop and dine with me ? ”

“ Thank you, I’m engaged to your neighbour, Raymond, where, perhaps, I may see you in the course of the evening. ”

“ You may rely on that, ” answered the Bonapartist ; “ we are seldom apart. ”

I dined at the chambers of the intimate above named ; he was engaged to an evening party, but volunteered dropping me at Lincoln’s Inn, “ to wine at Kennedy’s call. ” I did not then quite understand these technicalities. A Mr. Kennedy had been called to the bar, and given a dinner in hall ; after which refreshers would be welcome to share the drinkables. We went, and, to my utter amaze, my introducer presented me as “ Mr. Mackay of Edinburgh, ” (then performing at Drury Lane). Ere I could contradict, Graham, Clarke, Burchall, and others, who knew me, warmly welcomed Mr. Mackay, whispering —

“ Keep it up, or we’ll never forgive you ! Hoax the lawyers, in return for past favours. ”

What could I do? above two hundred members of the learned profession, among whom were some of its leaders, graced the hall. There must be Scots among them, and I had never then visited Caledonia, nor seen the man I was to personate; yet my familiarity with many of his countrymen, emboldened me to bother the big-wigs, though I own an Irish character would have been easier for me to sustain on the spur of the moment; but, unprepared as I was, I took my seat at the Vice-Chancellor's table, with howling humility.

To reassure me, "Mr. Mackay's health" was proposed in a speech, neatly complimenting "the unaffected modesty of real genius;" of course I must return thanks, and rising with a Hem, said gravely —

"Mester Kennedy, and gentlemen! though I'm rackoned, in Embro,' no that ill at reciting the thocts of ithers, fra a prent buk, 'let no yer fules say mair than is set doon for em,' as Shakspeare says; in my ain puir language I've na poor ta express, just my sense o' the honour dunc me—a stranger—hy this crudite assembly."

Laying my hand on my heart, I bent my head and resumed my seat, amid the plaudits of the company. I was soon called on for a song, to which I replied with great simplicity that I was "no engaged for the operatic business, but

would try one verse of some wild ditty o' my native hills."

A Scotch gentleman now addressed me.

"Ye're personally acquainted with Sir Walter, I believe, sir?"

"He has condescendingly noticed his ain Baillyee, as he has it, sir; and, I am proud to say, pit me in possession of some facts anent the Great Unknown Novels, of which vera few are aware."

"Mr. Mackay," said another, "I've only once had the happiness of seeing you in public, but then you appeared to me a stout, elderly man."

"'Tis my vocation, sir; art, trick, stage effect—whiles I can so disguise mysel that—but it wad na become me to boast. I diinna wonder, however, that you are surprised at my change."

He could not be more so than I was myself.

My supposed countryman had lived long enough in London to lose the accent, but, anxious to shew that he could still appreciate it when purely spoken, now said—

"You hear, gentlemen, what a different thing is real genuine Scotch from the blundering caricature of it so often imposed upon the public by cockney players. I ask you, is there any thing either harsh or drawling in the intonation of the true North Briton who has just spoken?"

"No, no! 'tis perfect, admirable, natural melody!" shouted my friends.

This foolery lasted some time, and, as men were coming and going all the while, some actually departed in the belief that they had conversed with the famed Nicol Jarvie.

At last one of the elect got on his legs, “ thinking it his duty to claim the thanks of the company, for a gentleman who had largely and very harmlessly contributed to the pleasures of the night, who, committed by the off-hand jest of a friend, had supported it with unpremeditated humour — unstudied acting, in which the real Simon Pure, had he been present, need not have shamed — he therefore begged to propose the health of Mr. Benson Hill, of the Artillery.”

The legal worthies filled their glasses, looking like young Pottengin, when he joins in the shouts of Beefincrantz and Puddingfelt, without any distinct notion of its cause. They evidently knew not where, nor who was the person named, nor what he had done to merit being toasted. I was *drunk*, however; and, again rising, threw aside the accent, to throw myself on the mercy of the court.

I came home by the Paris mail, and, on my way from Shooter’s Hill to my cottage, not having the fear of the law before me, committed a trespass, by climbing into a cherry tree, and tearing off a large branch, loaded with fruit, to cool my palate; pre-

senting myself to my sister, who sat up for me, like one of Malcolm's soldiers, when "Birnam wood was brought to Dunsinane;" but, oh, the day after! had Leander practised swimming with half the perseverance of my head, he'd never have drowned.

CHAPTER VIII.

*NO CORONATION—A ROYAL BANQUET—AN AGONY COACH—
TINTS NOT IN THE RAINBOW—PRINCE HAL AND HIS FOL-
LOWERS—FILIAL DIRECTIONS—THE MINORS—A GIG—LOVE
OF LIVE STOCK—MORE CROWNING JESTS—PAGES—OF LINES
OMITTED IN REPRESENTATION—QUEENLY OBSEQUIES.*

THE Coronation now occupied public attention. I had made arrangements to view the procession from the Hall to the Abbey, and anticipated that my love of sight-seeing would be amply gratified, when, to my extreme annoyance, I found that leave of absence was not to be obtained from headquarters. Certain intimations made it necessary that a portion of the Garrison should be on the alert, in case of accidents—my company was included in the arrangement. I afterwards learnt that I had to thank “Carrurlyne” for my disappointment.

Gladly did I listen to an account of this splendid day, from the lips of one fully competent to enter into all the details. Captain (now Sir Henry) Cipriani attended in his official capacity,

and I am indebted to him for an anecdote connected with the ceremonial which I have before recorded, but which I hope may not prove out of place here. With the preliminary details I had previously been familiar.

Between thirty and forty years ago, you could not pass through Holborn, during a certain portion of the year, without observing a string of carriages drawn up near a large house, the upper floors of which appeared magnificently furnished; and the groups of well-dressed people seen going in and coming out could not, if you had a grain of Eve's curse in your composition, but make you ask who it was that received so many fashionable visitors in such a dingy district.

You were informed that the celebrated Mrs. Williams, the renowned easter of nativities and teller of fortunes, honoured Holborn by residing in it; and if you were lucky enough to meet amongst your male friends one who had paid the lady a visit, you heard that she was a very handsome, though somewhat dark woman. The females differed on the subject of her beauty, influenced, doubtless, by the good or ill fortune foretold to them.

Amongst the numerous applicants to this dusky Lilly in petticoats, she had the honour of numbering the Prince of Wales; and, although

his Royal Highness endeavoured to preserve a strict incognito, he was hailed by his title on entering the abode of astrological research. The Prince did not scruple to tell the result of his visit.

“ The lady informs me that I shall live to be King, although my stars decree that I am not to be crowned.;

In the autumn Mrs. Williams usually visited the various resorts of fashion, Bath, Clifton Hotwells, Brighton, &c.; and it was during her sojourns at the two former places that what I am about to relate occurred.

No sooner was her arrival known in the city of Bladud, than her doors were besieged by persons of all classes; as it had been duly announced that a simple consultation was within the reach of the humblest, whilst an examination of the heavenly bodies to ascertain whether or not your star was in the ascendant must be remunerated by a price too exorbitant for the superstitious in the middle walks of life.

Amongst the first who found themselves confronted with this awful personage were two young ladies of family; the largest douçeur was tendered; and our Cassandra commenced turning over the leaves of the mystic volume. Suddenly the book was closed, and she started abruptly

from her chair. Then, leading one of the girls aside, she said impressively to her—

“I am too ill to take any trouble for that poor dear child to-day; you must leave me now, but only on this condition, that *you*,” and she grasped the hand of her auditor, whilst her dark eyes seemed almost lit up by supernatural fire, “you must solemnly promise to come to me to-morrow, let what will have chanced. ’Tis well—now, go!”

Faithful to her word, the terrified girl returned the next day.

“I ask not for your companion of yesterday,” exclaimed Mrs. Williams, “she is dead!”

A burst of tears from the afflicted friend confirmed the fatal sentence. This fearful tale was speedily told, and hundreds flocked to look upon and consult the same mysterious oracle.

The late Countess of M—— conceived it possible by a simple artifice to puzzle the conjurer; and accordingly attired herself in humble garb, taking with her the well dressed governess, on whose finger her ladyship had placed her own wedding ring. A guinea was tendered by Miss ——, whilst her mistress, trying to assume a rusticity of manner, dropped a curtesy, and offered a crown piece. Their separate palms were scrutinized by Mrs. Williams, who, after a brief investigation, turned to the matron, saying,

“ Why do you suffer that woman to wear your ring? is it not enough that she has already usurped your rights? Ay, blush and tremble, girl.”

Mrs. Williams was right.

An elderly maiden lady had lost many articles of plate, jewellery, and wearing apparel. Their unaccountable disappearance had caused the most serious uncasiness to her housekeeper, a trusty creature, who never left the house, except on a Sunday evening, to attend Lady Huntingdon's chapel; but, whose stay-at-home habits were broken through by the sudden determination of her lady to visit Mrs. Williams, in the hopes of obtaining some information respecting the missing property. The pious domestic talked about tampering with Satan, — Saul, and the Witch of Endor, in vain.

Miss F—— had made up her mind to go; and, what was more, to take her good Sally with her, as spokeswoman on the occasion; the excellent spinster being of a nervous and timid temperament. They reached the dwelling of the Sybil; Sally gave the fee, and a list of the lost articles, adding—

“ We shall be happy to pay you twice as much if you will assist us in finding them.”

“ *We* and *us*, woman!” said Mrs. Williams.
“ I wonder how *you* ventured to come to me,”

then turning to the alarmed mistress she continued, "there stands the thief!"

Down dropt Sally on her knees, confessed the fact; and, in consequence of this information, the house of the pew-opener of her favourite chapel was searched, the property found, and restored.

The Hotwells was the next scene of action.

Amongst the various extraordinary circumstances which occurred during her residence on Dowry Parade, one will suffice. A gentleman, holding a situation of considerable emolument in the Custom-house of Bristol, determined to procure, from so celebrated a votary of the planets, his horoscope; and, on presenting the usual guerdon, was desired to call on the following day for the important and scientific document. He did so, and found the lady in a most perturbed state. She appeared to be nearly overcome with strong emotion, as she bade him take back his guineas, and never, if he valued his happiness or respectability, look on her again.

Mr. O—— was a young man, certainly ten years younger than the handsome woman who so strangely forbade him her presence; and he was withal a nervous man. Apprehending that sickness or death were to befall him, he besought to know the worst at once.

"Neither ill health nor dissolution is threat-

ened; enough that disgrace, misfortune, and misery hang over you, unless you fly this moment, and pause not till you have placed half the world's distance between us."

"Why, what have I to fear from you, gentle and beautiful as you are?" demanded the alarmed O——.

"Leave me, leave me," replied the equally agitated fair, "and for once defy the malign influence of the stars, whose aspects now threaten destruction to both of us."

"At least inform me what shape the impending evil assumes. I will not quit you till you have so far satisfied me."

"Listen, then, and tremble! All last night was I engaged in casting your nativity; in vain I endeavoured to persuade myself that I had miscalculated a most important event. Still there it was, as plainly written by the hand of Fate as was your birth and mine; and thus it stood—that before the moon waned *you were to become my HUSBAND!*"

Her prediction was fulfilled. In three days Mr. O—— was married to the widow; and, in less than six weeks, he found himself in jail, loaded with the debts of his wife, who had deserted him, and resumed her former name.

I now come to the fact known only to one or two

who were in the immediate confidence of George IV., and which was related to me by Sir Henry, to whom the remark was addressed ; his official duties bringing him close to the person of his Monarch at the coronation.

No sooner was the crown placed upon the royal head, than, turning to his old and faithful servant, his Majesty said, exultingly,

“ Cipriani, Mrs. Williams was a false prophet !”

And here I will take the opportunity of mentioning, from the same authentic source, an instance of the King's extraordinary acquaintance with circumstances and situations in which he could hardly ever have been personally placed.

It will be remembered that, in the year 1811, the royal family of France, residing in England, were invited to a banquet at Carlton House by the Regent. The Prince, with his usual exquisite tact, had caused a drawing-room to be fitted up for the reception of the Bourbons ; hung with blue satin, powdered with fleurs de lis—a gracious compliment which was not wasted on the *sentiment* of the exiles. The Count de Lisle (Louis XVIII.) Count d'Artois, (afterwards Charles X.) and all the members of the unfortunate race, had, with one exception, assembled. The dinner hour had arrived. Cipriani was on duty in the en-

trance-hall, the Prince suddenly appeared, and asked—

“Has the Prince de Condé arrived yet?”

“No, your Royal Highness.”

“How provoking! We only wait for him,” and he rejoined his guests.

Ten minutes passed—at their expiration the Regent again inquired for his expected visiter—still no news of his arrival.

“Cipriani,” said the anxious host, “I feel convinced that the Prince de Condé has got into a hackney-coach, and the constables won’t let him pass. Do step out, and see if it be so.”

The Exon obeyed—sure enough he found the venerable Condé in number two hundred and something; his diamond-buckled feet in the straw, and constables, one to each horse, telling the Jarvey that he must put his fare down in the street. The baton, carried by the official, soon acted as a passport for the rattling vehicle to approach the gates; gladly claiming the arm of his deliverer, his infirm Highness mounted the steps of the palace, where he was speedily welcomed by one of the noblest hosts that ever presided at festive board.

How came the Regent to know so much of hackney-coaches and constables? “It were inquiring too curiously to inquire so.” If his

maiden daughter, in her teens, once deigned to use a street conveyance, why not her father, in his twenties?

When I was a cadet, my friend Cipriani commanded the Huntingdon Militia at Woolwich; I observed to him the singular circumstance that all the other officers of the regiment were Captains White, Green, Brown; Lieutenants White, and Gray; and, I believe, an Ensign Black; he replied—

“Yes, my dear boy, we are a small body, but, I hope, in garrison or the field, we shall never be so unfortunate as to lose our *Colours*.”

My sister and self found our way to town in a “yellow post-chay,” to witness the Second Part of Henry IV., got up at Covent Garden, for the ostensible purpose of crowning the Prince, whose early foibles, and subsequent glories, seemed, to the loyal, coincidences with the character of George IV. But, though the well-timed spectacle of a coronation was “a great feature,” nothing had been omitted that could render the whole performance worthy of its Shakspearean Theatre and management. Two idols of mine, indeed, seemed ill-cast. Fawcett’s manner was too harsh and dry for “sweet Sir John;” I should have preferred Yates’s; and Farley’s Pistol to Blanchard’s. Farren was Shallow, and did justice to the

name. Emery presented an "eloquent Silence ;" glorious were his drunken scraps of song, as he rolled about like a sack, under the care of Davy — evergreen Charles Taylor. Mrs. Davenport was not Quickly to be forgotten. Egerton proved himself a good Judge ; and Duruset "full bravely fleshed his maiden sword." Macready acted the Sick King to the very death. Charles Kemble's comic scenes shewed with what natural ease he could throw aside his dignity — The serious ones were equally admirable. His look, when Gascoign talks of what the royal rake-hell would feel, if a *son of his own* so transgressed—was "enough to set ten poets raving."

The interview with his brothers, after their parents' death, was the most simply, gracefully touching bit I ever enjoyed, even at *his* hands.

The procession was thronged with handsome men — Hunt, Connor, T. P. Cooke, and others, beside the Prince of Lancaster aforesaid — but their sovereign, as Leigh Hunt says of his Paulo,

" Never was nobler finish to fine sight."

I could prolong the quotation, and in no way flatter the gentleman to whom it is, indeed, so appropriate, that one might fancy the bard of Rimini had drawn the younger Malatesta from the youngest Kemble, barring the "curls of black."

Of the many who delighted me that night, how few yet live ! of those — how few are now in Europe ! of these — the best have retired from the stage ; all, all are growing old. “ Where is the life that late I led ? ” — “ The friends of my youth, where are they ? ”

“ Out upon Time, he will leave no more
Of the things *behind* than the things *before*.”

Byron. Hem !

It was at a party, given by my friend Raymond, that I first had the pleasure of meeting Mr. (now Serjeant) Talfourd ; from that day to the present, whenever we have met, or corresponded, I have found him as unaffectedly amiable as he appeared to me at first sight ; and I feel proud in thus adding another illustrious name to the acquaintance I have already mentioned.

We assembled on this day to the number of some twelve or thirteen, legal men, some of whom are now *leading* men, preponderating in the ratio of eight to five. We had also that clever builder of theatres, Mr. Beazley, who, not content with his fame as an architect, often draws large houses by his talent as a dramatist. Mr. Cooper, of Drury Lane Theatre, was the only wearer of sock or buskin present.

An excellent dinner was provided, and divers ice pails indicated that the wine would be as cool as plenteous ; we had taken our seats at the

board, when our host, with an earnest eager air, said—

“I deprecate, sir, the irreverent stage direction of that man who, on an occasion like the present, said to his laundress (need I add that such is the title bestowed on the respectable female factotums of our chambers?)—to one such an acquaintance of mine, on such a night as this, said, ‘Mrs. Aviary, if my father comes, take him into the kitchen, or tic him up with the dog.’ ”

There were few better sons, nevertheless ; but “Mr. Random must have his joke.”

“Cooper,” said Graham, “have you seen *Epidibus*?”

“Where?” asked the courteous John, “and what may it be?”

“Why, a tragedy, now playing, with great success, at the Tottenham Street Theatre ; and, from its classic beauties, carried over the water to the void ground near the new Bedlam ; there I heard it announced for representation by a gentleman, in Roman armour, who, with a truncheon pointed to a board, on which I perceived the important information—C. H. E. X. ‘chex here.’ ”

“Ah !” remarked Cooper, “these minor theatres will destroy the legitimate drama. Not that I know *Epidibus*, either in Inchbald’s or Oxberry’s collection—some blunder, of course.”

"Yes," said Graham, "the fellow meant that edifying drama called *Œdipus*."

"Oh, of course I ——"

"I see," interrupted Graham, and the conversation was changed.

My host of this very pleasant day drove down to Woolwich, the following week, in company with Mr. Dawson, and partook of the fare provided at our well conducted mess. They left me at a moderate hour, and certainly quite sober; but, owing to the horse taking fright, and jibbing against a bank, they were thrown into the road—Raymond suffering some slight contusions, whilst his companion was seriously hurt.

A public house was near; in fact, it would be difficult to select any portion of the road, between London and Greenwich, that did not boast such an advantage; Raymond assisted his bruised and wounded friend towards the house of reception, intimating that the gig was smashed to atoms.

"Is it?" sputtered poor Dawson, from his bleeding dust-filled mouth; "what a fool of a gig it must be then! But, George, worse than that—I've lost my *gloves*."

Raymond knocked and demanded entrance—the inmates had retired for the night—after some delay the landlord came to the door, and, seeing

the terrible state of Dawson's face, refused him shelter.

"No, no," said the innkeeper to George, "I've a got two corpses in my house a'ready, and I ain't going to have every room filled with crowner's quests—they bean't the customers for my money, not by no manner of means. You'll find the Nelson isn't far off, they bean't particular who they do let in, dead or alive."

Saying this, the door of the Publican and sinner was closed upon the suffering wayfarers; but the second host, whose sign displayed a faithful likeness of the hero of the Nile, proved a good Samaritan, and rendered all possible assistance, not only to my friends, but to their horse, who was found still attached to the wrack of the Tilbury.

It was some time before Dawson recovered from the effects of this upset.

"The lessee of that magnificent establishment, the Theatre Royal Doory Lane," as Elliston was wont to style himself, did not content his soul with a pageant of by-gone times; he, forsooth, must produce an "absolute and undoubted facsimile of all the gorgeous and imposing ceremonies observed at the Coronation of his present most sacred Majesty;" and, to give a greater effect to the spectacle, took upon his own shoulders

the weight of Royalty, recollecting that George the Third had considered *the* "young Dornton" "very like Wales."

In justice to Elliston's memory, it is but fair to say that he produced a spectacle on which the greatest care had been bestowed to render it as like the original ceremonial as possible. It is to be confessed that some of the principal figures in this "counterfeit presentment" strongly contrasted the personages for whom they passed. No Drury Lane walking gentleman, or heavy baronet, was likely to remind us of the lovely Londonderry, or the eagle Wellington. But the dresses were superb, the royal banquet well-appointed, and the Champion, attired in real armour, mounted on a real horse, rode gallantly over the heads of the audience in the pit, performed his devoir, and backed astern, in a manner that did honour to both man and beast.

The nightly greetings which the mimic monarch received, the burst of loyalty that hailed the placing of his foil-stone crown upon his managerial head, by the Right Reverend Mr. Gattie, who personated his Grace the Metropolitan Archbishop, sunk deeply into the heart of the romantic and susceptible Robert William; he could not resist fancying himself the being he personated. This innocent *monomania* was soon

talked of out of the theatre,—one evening some men I knew were determined to ascertain its extent; they went into the pit; their cheers were long and loud when the Royal form first came in view, every graceful action was rewarded with an approving shout; when he knelt at the faldstool they imposed silence on the audience, but, when he crossed the pit, they clung to the hem of his robe, and enthusiastically uttered “Long live your Majesty!” Overcome by such symptoms of devotion, King Robert, extending his hands over their heads, articulated through tears, “Bless you, my people!”

So completely had the illusion taken possession of this “King of shreds and patches,” that, on retiring to his dressing-room, at the conclusion of the performance, after moistening his royal lips with a copious draught of Madeira, he turned to his acting manager, saying—

“——, you have been a faithful servant to us for many a year, 'tis fit we should mark our sense of your devotion—kneel down;” seizing the wooden sword of state, he gave the royal accolade, then, with a dignified air, exclaimed, “Arise Sir ——!”

Yet, though Elliston's head might be turned by this imaginary exaltation, his heart still sympathized with the lowest necessities of his supposed

subjects. One instance of Royal consideration was related to me by an actress, as good as she *is* clever, and *was* beautiful.

There was a period of the Coronation ceremony at which the monarch knelt, for some time apparently in silent prayer, while music and dumb show supplied the place of words too holy to be breathed in a play-house. A bevy of pretty pages stood idly around ; and, one night, their august master, from behind his clasped hands, muttered, with impressive significance—

“ Now, if any of you little boys want to—leave the presence, and—refresh yourselves—take advantage of this interregnum— make your retreat—go ! do it !—you’ll not be missed, only *manage* so as to be back in good time.”

It happened that full half of these “ little boys ” were big girls, or rather young women ; into whose faces the really masculine pages lacered, at receiving this fatherly leave of absence, as if it had meant—I can’t tell what. My fair informant laughed as she told it me, and expected an echo from my lips—not in vain. What a *petit mot* will sometimes divert us, without our ever being able to explain why !

After the Coronation came “ The Ruffian Boy.”

“ Gerald Duval, the bright and terrible,” as Mrs. Opie hath it by Cooper ; with Monsieur

Tonson by Gattie. Those who were not present will scarcely believe that the first act of that since popular afterpiece went but flatly on its first night. I did not stay for the second.

On the 7th of August, it pleased God to remove from this world Caroline of Brunswick, and the fourteenth was the day appointed for the transport of her remains from Brandenburg, on their way to Germany. Business required my presence in London, and my first visit was to my friend Bartlett, at the Foreign Office. Whilst conversing with him, we were interrupted by the sound of fire-arms, and concluded that some collision had arisen between the military and the mourners. In about half-an-hour word was brought of the affair at Cumberland Gate, but, as is usual in all such cases, the most exaggerated report reached us, the slain were multiplied into hundreds, including many of the military.

"My greatest dread," said Bartlett, "is that if Lord Londonderry be coming hither to-day, the wretches may attack his carriage."

"Heaven forbid!" I cried sincerely.

"Oh, they were all as quiet as doves when I *walked* through them," uttered a warm voice near us.

I turned, and bared my head, beneath the fine hazel eyes of the nobleman in question.

Like an humble countryman of his, he had thought "the more public the more private,"* and had often found the cool bravery that shone over his handsome face disarm his foes. It was very characteristic of his *style* to bestow the grace of silence on the hysterical birds of Venus, and to compare with these emblems of peace a radical London mob.

Bartlett advised me to return to Woolwich directly, as he thought the news of this terrible affair might reach my sister, and create anxiety; but I was obliged to call in Chancery Lane, and, promising to avoid the mob, I left him.

And here (par parenthèse) I cannot resist mentioning a trait of Lord Londonderry's character, which fell under my observation upon another occasion, proving how little the pitiful attempts of low democrats were regarded by him.

"My friend Hill of the Artillery, my lord," said Bartlett, "was asking for a frank; might we trespass on your Lordship?"

"Stay," I said, "I cannot ask such a favour till you have told his lordship for what and for whom."

Bartlett explained that I wished to send Mrs. Watson, widow of Llandaff's celebrated Bishop, Hone's illustrated pamphlet, in which the Premier

* Vide Recollections of an Artillery Officer, vol. i., page 154.

was designated "Derry down Triangle." Bartlett whispered also the fact of my ultra-Toryism.

"Sir," said the peer, with a bow and a smile as he wrote the direction, "I hope it will make the dear old lady at Calgarth laugh."

So much courage and urbanity, enshrined in a person so prepossessing, made me wonder that John Bull could not be, like Byron's Harold, content with such "fair spirit," for his "*Minister*."

Never had I seen the Strand so deserted as on this day, but scarcely had I reached Lincoln's Inn, when a dense mass of human beings was seen advancing; their appearance betokened them of the lowest and vilest orders of society; their looks were infuriated, and they seemed ripe for mischief. The exclamations that burst from their lips were fearful.

With the most disgusting and blasphemous oaths they vowed they would have *her body* through the city, if they were forced to take it out of the coffin, and carry it on their shoulders; not an expression of respect for the departed, or regret for her loss, escaped them; the most irreverent and unseemly jokes were bandied about — and these were the Queen's friends. Her enemies, the admirers of good order, morality, and decency, would willingly have let her remains be conveyed

to their last home in quiet; but these zealous partizans of the "injured queen" hoped that something might arise, in the passage of her corpse through the city, that might lead to the plunder of the well-filled shops and warehouses. Anarchy was their object, and they could not (then) have chosen a more befitting watchword than "the Queen," no matter whether dead or alive.

Thanks be to the two virtuous gentlewomen who have since restored that honoured title to the rank it held in the days of George III.'s respected consort.

CHAPTER IX.

A WARNING TO BAILIFFS—SAUCE PIQUANT—GOING TO THE WYE AND WHEREFORE—A HOSPITABLE BEGGAR—AN EXPERIMENT—BROTHER SOLDIERS—FEMALE ENERGY—A DREADFUL LAY—LADIES DATED—WHAT'S IN A NAME—POPPING THE QUESTION—REFUSAL—ARGUMENT—CONSENT—CANDID GRATITUDE—VIRTUE HOW AMIABLE—WOMAN'S CREDULITY.

I SHALL not minutely describe my amateuring trips, to play for the benefits of pretty actresses, certainly not for my own; but one such excursion deserves a brief passing notice.

A tolerably large party dined at my house, one Sabbath, to re-unite there that day week. It included Mr. Cooper, from London, and another friend from Greenwich. I had promised, and intended to perform, at Tunbridge Wells, on the following Saturday. A very clever and rather mature Cadet, burning to distinguish himself, also obtained leave, on false pretences, accompanied me, and, with borrowed name and rank, enacted Jerry Sneak, in admirable style. Ere he made

this début, however, our locality furnished me with an opportunity for raising a laugh. The stage of that theatre is exactly over a stream which divides two counties; when the Bums came to arrest me as Tangent, I ran back across this invisible boundary, shouting—

“If your writ’s for Kent, touch me at your peril, ye villains, for I’m now in Surrey!”

It were superfluous to dilate on *how* I was detained next morning, till there seemed little chance of my getting home in time to do the honours of my table. A chaise was our only resource, and, with hard driving, we reached the vale, a quarter of an hour after the appointed period. We found the company assembled, but the dinner not spoiled—though *we* were rather over roasted for “seampering about” after our country Thalias.

Some grouse had been sent me from Scotland.—They ought to have been drest some days before. We nosed them ere they came up—they did not look half done.

“I can’t help it,” said Turner, “they won’t take the fire; and they was deadly loively, in spoite o’ the stuffing put to make ’em keep.”

Their craws were full of heather blossoms, which he had left in, mistaking them for sweet herbs. Barlow and I nevertheless composed a

sauce which might have made a man eat his grandmother ; 'warmed up in this they were devoured betwixt us all—not a soul venturing to call their flavour too *high*.

Having obtained my winter leave, my sister and self bade farewell to our numerous friends, and left Nightingale vale for a visit to the West of England. We both felt regret at quitting a place, which, by some attention, had been rendered so delightful. The garden was full of autumnal flowers, and every where bore evidence of the industry of Turner and myself.

A few days' sojourn in town enabled us to see many of our acquaintance, and to visit the theatres.

We saw Kenney's "Match Breaking," at the Haymarket, an elegant little comedy, in which Terry, Jones, Mrs. Chatterley, and Mrs. Baker, shone their best. This drama had not a long run in London, nor was it ever a favourite in the provinces, though the plot was original, and the language correct—it "lacked bustle"—'twas said—so much for public taste !

I had not been long in the neighbourhood of Bristol, when, one day, calling at the post-office, I encountered an old and much valued friend, whom I had not met for many years, the intimate acquaintance of Sir Alexander Dickson and myself, during our "wars in Flanders."

Mr. Trotter, then commissary, attached to the Battering train, was now peacefully residing on the banks of the Wye, and superintending a farm. I introduced him to my family, and received a pressing invitation to visit him. Of this I shortly availed myself.

After a delightful journey, and a pleasant crossing of the Passage, I found the worthy Scotchman snugly housed, with a farm round him, of about eight hundred acres, on Tiddenham chace. Although the estate of my host lay on a flat, or table of land, the scenery in the neighbourhood was of very picturesque beauty; the rich and varied tints of Autumn added to the charms of the landscape. After a hearty welcome and lunch, Trotter was obliged to leave me to myself, having affairs, connected with his agricultural pursuits, that would occupy him till dinner. I rambled alone, and soon found myself on the height commanding a view of the Wye; this lovely river is little known to those who rave about the Rhine. For my own part, I am English enough to confess that I should prefer a second visit to this charming district, to encountering the discomforts of travelling on the Continent.

We dined tête-à-tête; the evening was occupied in talking over past scenes, and recounting our various adventures since we parted.

The next morning my host took upon him the office of *cicerone*; led me first, with great and justifiable pride, over his homestead; pointed out the black cattle, and peculiar breed of sheep he had imported from his own country—certainly these animals appeared to have benefited by their change of locality. Although surrounded with woods, he had planted a ring fence of some twenty thousand Scotch fir and larch; the young shoots were looking healthy, and promised, in less than six lustres, to become very respectable scaffold-poles, or spars.

A singular rock, named the Devil's Pulpit, was the first thing we visited, after leaving the farm. Now what the Devil could find to preach about in a scene so heavenly I am at a loss to conjecture; but there was a time when the ground on which we walked was included in the Principality, and the Welsh have, from time immemorial, ascribed strange fancies to that said Devil, witness his bridge at Aberglasslynn, and other proofs of his supposed fondness for Cambria.

We proceeded by a bridle road, such as constituted the common means of communication to our ancestors, not many centuries ago, ere mail-coaches or Mac Adam were dreamt of; this led us to the ferry opposite the magnificent ruin of Abbey Tintern. I had seen many paintings and

drawings of the famous pile, hut its reality far exceeded in beauty all that art had shewn me. Great portion of this splendid structure was clothed in ivy, its deep foliage contrasting with the white and time-honoured walls to which it clung. We crossed the ferry, and, led by the pretty daughter of the owner of the boat, entered the Abbey; the extent of the building, the elaborate carving on its walls, the clusters of columns of the most delicate proportions, and the far-famed southern window, all served to delight me. I scarcely remember to have experienced greater pleasure than I derived from roaming through these ruins, and felt much disposed to protract my stay as long as daylight allowed me to explore odd nooks and corners, worthy of remark; but my friend reminded me that he expected a party to dine with him, and, as I knew they were assembled in honour of my humble self, I was obliged to forego the picturesque, and prepare for the social.

The clergyman of a neighbouring parish and his son, with a retired army-surgeon, practising *en amateur*, and some half-dozen of the neighbouring squirearchy arrived shortly after the appointed hour for dinner. We sat down to substantial fare, with excellent Madeira and Port, both, like My Lord Duke's snuff, of my host's

“own importing.” With the military doctor I talked over the events of the late war—with the parson, on the best profession he could select for the fine young man who had accompanied him—now and then I listened with great satisfaction to the praises bestowed by the gentlemen farmers on the extraordinary improvement manifest on “the Chace,” since it had been under the skilful management of my indefatigable and clear-headed friend. I could not avoid expressing my admiration of the surpassing scenery of the neighbourhood, and rejoiced to find that the residents, who saw it every day, were not, on that account, regardless of the beauties which could not fail to attract the attention of a stranger.

Broiled bones, and some of those exquisite little oysters from Tenby, with real Glenlivet and genuine Schiedam, were offered to the guests at a moderate hour; and, before midnight, every inmate of the farm had retired to rest.

A brilliant autumnal morning tempted me forth early. I determined on making a sketch of Tintern, as a memorial of my present sojourn.

Next day I visited Chepstow, but, instead of taking the ordinary road, we crossed the Abbey ferry, and journeyed over a miniature Simplon, constructed by the Duke of Beaufort; this novel and convenient route ran by the side of the Wye;

small bridges had been thrown over the deep gullies that sloped to the river. A huge mass of grey stones, which appeared to have been cast from the plain above us, attracted my attention. The bright beams fell on this avalanche, which glittered with a brilliancy that was not to be seen on the neighbouring rocks. I dismounted to pick up a piece of the shining material, and found that it was what, as a schoolboy, I had been used to call "Plum-pudding stone;" as the lump I had selected would have been but a small slice of its namesake, I put it in my pocket. I must here confess my perfect ignorance of geology, but shall presently show that the curiosity of an ignoramus led to good results.

A succession of ever-varying landscapes was afforded by the winding of the beauteous Wye, I did not think in accordance with the great George Robins. He being some years ago "entrusted" with the sale of "the far-famed Piercefield estate," in his usual style dilated on the value of the property, concluding his description with this astounding intelligence—

"But the Grand Desideratum is the views!"

With the ruins of Chepstow castle, and the quiet old-fashioned town, I was much pleased. A gentleman, who occupied a sweet cottage, mid-way on our journey home, pressed us to

stop. This worthy person had a penchant for affixing an apology to every act of kindness.

“Trotter, my dear fellow,” said he, “I am delighted to see you. I beg your pardon, but I hope you will stop dinner. My dear sir,” turning to me, “you’re welcome to my humble roof! I beg your pardon, but don’t you like the situation? This turn of the river is one of the finest in its course, and I am sure, I beg your pardon, but you admire it as much as I do.”

I cannot resist one more specimen, which was afforded me when the cloth was drawn.

“Now, gentlemen, fill a bumper for a toast I know you will both drink with pleasure. I beg your pardon — the King!”

This *façon de parler*, which would become tedious on paper, was extremely diverting in reality. The less reason there was for asking forgiveness, the more surely would the good man favour you with his pet phrase.

I accompanied Trotter, the following morning, over a portion of the farm I had not yet visited; it was nearly opposite to the huge mass of stones which I had observed the day before, and the agriculturist regretted that the surface of some three or four fields was broken by large masses of rock, that rendered ploughing impracticable. These lumps, none of them projecting more than

three or four feet above the surface, were covered with moss and lichens ; of course I imagined that to remove them would be attended with too heavy an expense to warrant the undertaking.

To make room for a newly-placed gate, one of these obnoxious rocks had been broken, and I saw that the character of the stone was precisely the same as my plum-pudding specimen. I ventured to suggest to Trotter the possibility that the opposite side of the river might, at some remote period, have been subject to a volcanic eruption, and that, during the convulsion, these stones, evidently unlike all others on his side the water, might have been showered over these fair pastures ; he received my notion with coldness, but I at length persuaded him to try an experiment ; his labourers were sent for, the earth, which, by the way, was of the richest soil, was dug up at some depth round several of the most formidable of these impediments, when, to Trotter's joy and surprise, it was found that much less of rock was below the surface than above, so that, with a trifling labour, the stones could be removed, and the fields reclaimed. I could not but exult that an accidental remark of mine proved of such utility to the landed proprietor.

I took leave of my hospitable friend with the most sincere wish for his complete success in his

agricultural pursuits, and returned homewards much gratified at my week's visit.

One day, in a walk with my sister, I saw an odd person, whom I must not here describe, and heard her queer name, which I shall not just now tell, because thereby hangs a tale; I will relate it without forestalling its interest.

When our County regiments were nearly all volunteering into the Line, for active service, (about 1809-10,) the—— Militia lay at Bristol. This corps consisted of "picked men," in the prime of life; soldiers and officers respected and beloved by the citizens, for their correct conduct and sociability.

A *fair* specimen of the whole body was one Lieutenant from the Lakes; a parson's son, kind and lively, but moral and modest; a favourable sample of his brother officers.

Colin Raby, though in form what is vulgarly termed "a strapper," threatened to remain for life beardless as he was at twenty-seven. I shall expurgate the *sobriquet* bestowed on him, in consequence of this deficiency, by a more hirsute friend. At our reformed era not even the Muse of comic prose must be heard of as *en chemise*.

Raby, I implied, was fair; too fair to look as florid as did less vigorous but browner wights; yet, mark me, with his blue eyes and golden hair,

no hempen brows, no parsnip-tinted lashes, had been entailed; his features were prominent and noble, with an expression of cheerful thought; but so mild, so pure, so calm, so unobtrusive, that the ladies said "he was worthy to have been a clergyman, like his papa;" while the ladies'-maids *kept on a-wondering* about him, if—and whether—a thousand things, which I have not space to repeat.

When I hinted at him "as a sample of all the rest," I meant all but one. One exception proved the rule; one any thing but unnatural contrast to his fellows, nevertheless, elicited such comparisons as complimented all parties concerned. "The slightest speck is seen on snow;" but the whiteness of the ——shire's repute was not stained by the name which Lieutenant Ulic Carrol had earned; that of a "rollicking lad, a fine creature, all heart." To his quieter brethren he was the foil, the coquettish set-off, *couleur de rose*, no further harm; and if, Austrian fashion, they had reversed the proportions of hue in their dress, sporting cream-coloured coats, trimmed with scarlet, Ulic might have represented the facings; his hardihood would have stood *cuff for cuff*; his uprightness might have *collared* the whole regiment.

Carrol was an animal of dapper figure, and

sign-board comeliness ; black eyes, curls, whiskers, red cheeks and lips, white teeth, each alternate instant visible ; for he laughed at every thing—at nothing ; and was altogether as inconsequent a bit of “ food for powder ” as ever graced the army.

In spite all sentimental doctrines about “ congenial souls,” Ulic’s regard for Colin was enthusiastic ; and Colin, though less ardent, held Ulic as his “ brother-in-arms.” He never lectured the scapegracc, who, for his part, quizzed “ Raby Baby,” and “ Lubin the shepherd,” before the whole mess. But our Damon and Pythias knew each other well, each knew himself too, and that both were known to those above and beneath themselves, in age or rank, as ready to give or take a joke, but incapable either of insulting, or of brooking an insult.

One summer evening, the pair sauntered, in mufti, up the hilly streets, leading from their lodgings near the mess-house, to the down.

“ Smooth-face ! ” said Ulic, “ when I call you *milk-sop*, you know well enough I’d knock down any man bla’guard enough to dranic, in his sleeve, that I was brute baste enough to mane any disparagement to your pluck, my Arcadian ! ”

“ Nay,” returned Raby, coolly, “ there’s *one* man who, if *he* dreamt so, you would not knock down.”

“ I’d not, sir ? who’s he then, I’d be proud to larn.”

“ Myself, master Ulic.”

“ Yourself ? by the blessed Bridget, that’s a poser ! but, if you were such a big baby, I *would* ; if—”

“ If I gave you time ; but, perhaps, I should strike first. When you got up again, indeed —”

“ Man alive !” cried Carol, “ May be I’d never get up. *That* would turn all my pluck against myself, and smash me entirely ; the certainty that I must fight with you if get up I did—”

“ No chance of that, my hot potato ! tho’ I hope you will fight with me, in another sense.”

“ What, together, side by side ? long life to us, that will we ! But, faith, you’ve bothered my argimint. By milksop, I only mane—you have so many more nice ways in spaking, dressing, every thing, than even our best-behaved fellows, that I’m sure you must have been your mammy’s pct. How would she be brought to spare you from her apron-string ?”

“ She yielded her own wishes to mine, which sprung from a feeling of duty. I am not quite effeminate enough to be ferocious in my gallantry, as some apparent milksops have been. See Alcibiades and Claverhouse !”

“ I’d like to see ’em right well. What regi-

ment? Are they in the same? and can they agree as well as you and I do?"

"I hope so," replied Raby smiling.

"Och, now, that's some blunder of mine, by raison that bar'rn going to the play, or humming a bit of a love pome, I never rade—to spake of. No matter, my chaney-ornimint! You said galantry. What I mane by milksop is—you're no devil among the girls."

"I must recriminate. In female society I'm not such a young Marlow as you are."

"I never *was* at Marlow, sir; d'ye reflect on my edycashun?"

"No, *my* Marlow's 'a man in a play,' as you say."

"Oh, another thing quite; and so is what *I* meant—from female society. With the ladies, sure, you're at home, like a brother; while I feel as awk'ard as our hautbois, with his front-teeth knocked out, for being civil to a sailor's wife. But, in the streets or fields, I can't for the life of me help spaking to every well-looking wench I meet."

"At the risk of alarming some, to no purpose, and offending others at your own peril."

"Peril! Bathershin!"

"Yet our hautbois lost his teeth."

"Och, the tar of a husband was at hand, to

chastise *him*. As for the women, they're never raly angry, or if so, aisily molified."

At this moment a very flaunting girl crossed the path of the two *militaires*, and Carol began—

"How d'ye do, my love?"

No reply, but a stare, and toss of the head.

"I say, pretty dear! swate lips you have, I'm fond to belave, but I want to see 'em closer."

"Then want may be your master, for me," retorted the minx.

"Not a bit of it, my darlint," he added, approaching her. "I tell ye, I must—"

"Must?" she sneered. "Must is for the King, not for every fellow as wears his livery. I know your impidint face, though you *are* in plain clothes."

"By the mother that bore me!" cried Ulic, intercepting her retreat.

"*Your* mother, bog-trotter!" quoth she; "your mother might be used to be pulled about, before witnesses, by strangers, whether she liked it, whether 'twas made worth her while or no; but, come anightst *me*, and I'll box your ears, I'll tear your eyes out!"

"Mighty well, Miss; your servant!" said Carol, retiring; but Colin pointedly quoted—

"'They are never really angry,' or 'easily molified;' try her!"

Thus shamed on, Carol caught the girl's arm, and was drawing her towards him, when, with the disengaged hand, fist-wise, she dealt him such a blow on the head, that, if his companion, against whom he fell, had not stood firm as a rock, both must have rolled down hill together. The fair pugilist ran giggling away. The disconcerted hero rubbed his ear, muttering—

“ ’Tis *I* that am *Molly*-fied, with a vengeance. The vicious jade !”

“ Yes,” said Colin, “ she looks exactly, and every way—*that*. Yet even *such* think ‘ *C’est le manier qui fait tout,*’ believe me.”

“ Belave what I don’t understand, sir ?”

“ Ay, sometimes — but — to explain — all women feel that ‘ there is a *form* in these things,’ and think less of the folly than of the *way* in which it was committed. Even the virtuous will excuse any *honest* freedom, if recommended by a proper manner.”

“ Prove your words, my lad of wax !” cried Carol eagerly. “ Kiss me the first woman we meet.”

“ Be she what she may ?” asked the fastidious Colin.

“ To be sure—no backing out.”

“ *Au contraire* ; if the first we meet look as bold as the last, I will do as you request, but

count that for nothing. 'Slips go over again' at boys' play, you know. The next unmistakeably modest woman we meet I will also kiss, and come off unscratched, for it shall be without force; only give me time."

"Time!" said the astonished Ulic; "what, for half-an-hour's flattery, I suppose."

"No, no flattery. I'll tell her the truth, and in as few minutes as possible; look to your watch, if I exceed *seven*——"

"Bet ye a dozen of Madara you don't *succade*," thundered Carol.

"Poo! Subs can't afford such wagers."

"Trash! you're afraid."

"Certain that you'll lose rather."

"Stuff and nonsense! 'tisn't in ye to do it, sir."

"Come, if you win, I'll forfeit the Madeira, to be drank at mess. If the reverse, you shall stand a bottle of champagne, to be shared between us at my lodgings."

"Sir, you're the *fairest* of layers. Done with you."

"Done."

It was now twilight; they were in a lonely path on the extensive down, and soon saw a small, spare, erect figure approaching them, with a fearless business-like step. She wore a neat

white gown, a shallow scarlet mantle, and black mode bonnet, deeply bordered with lace. Her features were sharp, slightly crow's-footed, with a hale, autumnal complexion. She was indisputably respectable.

"Hurrah!" laughed Carol, aside to his friend, "the champagne's mine, (for I won't rob you of more) the *râle*, as somebody says in a play, will be your's, for that ould maid will snap your good-looking nose off."

In the days when population had need thrive to supply the gaps made by war, "mere children" were mothers, and we had young "old maids." Early marriages were so general, that a woman left single at "the years of discretion" began to wean herself from girlish vanities, and make way for her juniors. Since then, ladies have discovered the art of growing younger as time advances. Some married at the beginning of this century are conquering beauties still, other tender creatures are not yet of age, though born at the same period, their mothers say. One such daughter I heard sigh—

"Poor ma! *she* knows nothing about it."

We have also lots of "old boys."

The little Red Riding-Hood in question, however, was a true old maid, proud of boasting her real age, because, though "Nature did all," she

looked less *annuated* than she was, and still stood on the sunny side of forty—I mean the thirty side; though “the sunny side of thirty” may be fifty-two.

Ulic drew out his watch, as Colin, advancing a step or so, bared his head, and, with a serious bow, began—

“Madam.”

“Sir!?” exclaimed the spinster, trumping his full stop by something between the admiration point and the note of interrogation.

“Pardon my abruptness,” Colin continued, “my name is Raby; may I ask your’s?”

“Dear me!” fluttered the prim damsel, “what can you want with my name?”

“Much, ma’am. I am a poor soldier.”

“Poor, and a soldier?” repeated she, in feminine curiosity. “I thought, by your bow, you was an officer.”

“Yes, ma’am, on the eve of fighting abroad.”

“Well, sir, and how does that concern me?”

“Why, ma’am, the eyes of Europe are upon us. Mr. Carol, there, has forced on me a heavy wager, that I shall prove, even with ladies—a milksop. It is for *you* to disgrace me with the whole garrison, or to remove that odium from my character.”

“Me, sir? Wagers are silly, spendthrift things,

I never encourage 'em ; but, as I guess your bet, and suppose you wouldn't let me pass till I *did* tell my name, if you must know—'tis Miss Popjoy. Mistress Martha, I call myself ; Patty, for shortness."

Carol rammed his kerchief into his mouth, to check an explosion of mirth, at this oddly appropriate, but *authentic* self-announcement. Impatient for the catastrophe, he now called, "Time." Colin, with insinuating deference, resumed—

"Miss Popjoy, that is not all ; without delay or apology must I state my request. Permit me to——salute you."

"Salute !" she reiterated, "why, so you did, as it were. Gracious bless us ! Surely you don't mean to——"

"Kiss you, ma'am, if you please."

"But if I *don't* please, young youth ?" bridled she.

"Then, ma'am, I lose my wager and my reputation, that's all ; of course I must submit."

"Ha," she said. "I'm glad you have that much grace left. You did not bet about *me*, in particular ; 'tis mere chance my falling in your way. You would tell it all at mess, with my name too ; so—you *MUST submit !*"

She looked up at the brawny Cumbrian, with a glance to which the rapture of petticoat tyranny

lent a provoking fire. Carol trod on air, as Colin sighed—

“ Well, ma’am ; say but that you forgive me ; beneath the dangers, toils, privations, of a foreign cham—*cam*-paign, I should not die the happier for having disgusted one of the dear country-women, who have so often sacrificed time and means, tired hands and eyes, to send our sick and wounded——”

“ Flannel waistcoats, and—*ceteras*,” interrupted the patriotic Patty. “ I’ve made dozens in my day, for ’em.”

“ Heaven reward you !” said Colin, fervently.

“ Well, I vow and protest,” she admitted, “ you seem a steady, pretty-spoken sort of a man. Man ? I should say, compared with me, a mere——”

“ Baby !” broke in Carol, impulse getting the better of interest.

“ True, sir !” she cried.

Raby might be ten years her younger. She went on—

“ And then, as one of my native land’s brave defenders ——”

She knew that he never could have seen shot fired in earnest.

He waited for no more, took her hand, gently lifted her black lace, and murmured—

“ May I ?”

Covered with blushes, she turned her cheek, luckily downy as his own ; but he found his way to her lips, and imprinted on them two salutes—the ‘first brief and audible, the second long and less sonorous. He never *said* it *was* returned, but I happen to know.

“Thank you, sir !” gasped Martha, curtsying, with tearful eyes. “I only trust that your friend, there, may behave himself as politely.”

“Bravo !” cried Carol, taking this for a permission to follow *his* friend’s example ; he ran boisterously up ; but Miss Popjoy, re-collecting her scattered senses, said gravely—

“That was not in the bargain. You may kiss my hand ; but, Mr. Raby, I think *you* called yourself, don’t let him touch my veil.”

She dropped it. Ulic, though dreading no punishment from her un-prudish chastity, contented himself with mumbling her mittens, and owning that—

“Modesty had bated impudence hollow, and within the seven minutes.”

Mrs. Martha allowed the beaux to see her home, and there cordially dismissed them. It was a great night for her. She never ceased to vaunt that she “had saved a sweet young gentleman’s purse and fair name.”

Often, after the friends had been sent abroad,

did she peruse the Gazette, with affectionate solicitude. Among the wounded, at one of our glorious victories, she saw—

“Lieut. Colin Raby of the —th, severely, not dangerously.”

“Lieut. U. Carol, slightly.”

Both distinguished themselves, recovered, and drew useful conclusions from the result of their wager.

It was not very long before I heard this story that the now quite elderly Mistress Martha Popjoy gave half-a-crown to a *soi-disant* ex-soldier, because *when* she asked him, “if he had ever served with Captain Raby,” the fellow swore “he knew the gen’leman well, as the bravest officer that ever took King’s pay.”

CHAPTER X.

EXORBITANT LANDLORDS—A POST HOUSE—AN OXFORD TRAGEDY
— THE RUSSIAN IMPERIAL — A MISAPPREHENSION OF LIQUID
CONSONANTS — ONE OF CAREY'S CHICKENS — CIVILITY ON THE
ROAD—A SUPPRESSED PROFILE SKETCH — A KEEN HATER—IN-
STRUMENTS OF TORTURE—CAVALRY—ENTITLED TO RESPECT.

EARLY in November, my sister and self set off for London, determining to visit Oxford in our way. Having time at our command, we halted for the first night at Bath. This reminded me of what I had heard, in my childhood, of some sexagenarian describing his first visit to the metropolis, and gravely asserting that the coach stopped for the passengers to dine at Keynsham, and that they slept the first night where we did on this occasion. How many days the venerable twaddler was occupied in his journey, he either did not specify, or I have forgotten.

The cross mail to Oxford leaves the famed City of Baths in the morning. We were fortunate in having, as our fellow-passenger, a very intelligent

cordial old gentleman. Seeing us come from the White Hart, he took occasion to hint that they must have made us *pay* there ; on my assuring him that I had no reason to complain of the charges, he replied,

“ I think I know every inn in England. Did you ever hear what was said by the elder Colman, to the landlord of the Ship at Dover, a house, to this day, notorious for exorbitant charges. Well, when Colman was about to settle with the landlord, he complained of having been much disturbed by the rats. Mine host declared that he had tried all sorts of things, but could not get rid of them. The traveller offered, if he would take a moderate sum, instead of the one demanded, and give a receipt, *he* would give *another*, which should effectually drive away the rats. The innkeeper was really losing custom by these vermin, and complied, when the dramatist concluded, ‘ Now, just show the rats such *bills* as these, and take my word they will get out of your house as fast as they can, never to return.’ ”

This pleasant he-gossip also described a curious sign near Coventry—it represented one thick rail stuck erect in the earth, and one lying *on* it,—he had asked its meaning ; his landlady replied—

“ Why, sir, the mails to and from London meet here. I bade the painter do something to signify the up-and-down posts, and there 'tis, you see, without much trouble.”

Late in the evening we reached Oxford, and reposed for the night under the sheltering wings of the Angel.

An intimate friend of our's, who was a member of the University, joined us soon after breakfast, and kindly lionized us over the many attractive sights of this seat of learning.

But how or why attempt to describe the palaces of its High Street, its halls, quadrangles, libraries, galleries, and "theatre?" The view from the Radcliffe, the ivy of Merton, the dancing-water at the end of Addison's Walk, called up a thousand associations of idea. The spirits of the great, who there had learnt or taught, seemed hovering over the scene. We thanked the bygone wars 'twixt "gown and town," the exploits of quondam "bull-dogs," and the umquihle luxuries of "the buttery hatch," to which Philip Massinger might have owed inspiration. When we stood in the Bodleian, we stared as if it had never before occurred to us that there were so many books in the world. The perfume of its Norway oak, its reverend stillness, scarcely broken by the stealing steps of some old hard reader, in tattered academicals, all imprest our fancies.

But the stillest, the most intent student there was well clad, young, handsome—rather pale, grave more than melancholy—with a quiet stead-

fast air, which would of itself have interested our curiosity, even had not our friend, after saluting this gentleman *en passant*, sighed "Poor fellow!" Of course we asked "How and why?—he looks not like one of your *Poor Fellows*."

Our conductor roughed the subject, till alone with me, when he said—

"That youth is well born and rich, but was early devoted to learning; amiable as moral, a legitimate attachment could not interrupt his philosophical career—he wasted little time on wooing. The beautiful girl could appreciate him, and was soon won. By general consent it was arranged that she should reside in a small house which he took *here*; a female friend would be her companion, while her only rivals, books, kept the married *bachelor* from his home. Even on the wedding day he brought her hither, determining to begin matrimonial life as he meant to continue it.

"Nothing could be more rational, more happy! Our gay devils (though really respecting the bride) intended to rally the lover, on the reconciliation he had effected between the contrasted, oft-contending duties owed to Cupid and to Pallas—but—our mirth was smothered—as I feel now. Next morning the husband awoke beside the corpse of his wife."

The narrator indeed looked choking. I was mute till he could conclude.

“Some of us feared he would go mad—destroy himself, fall into a consumption, and die—try travel—pleasure—turn methodist, or atheist—but, as soon as the funeral was over, he came back, just as you saw him—silent but calm; his whole mind seems now given up to letters, for their own sakes; he is not ambitious—speaks neither of the future nor the past. I believe him resigned, but mark me! he will never marry again.”

I shall put forth no common places on “the inscrutable ways, &c. &c.” but gladly quit so sad a theme now, as I did then, and recount one piece of information for the benefit of the curious, which I received from a *very* little old woman, who acted as guide over the Peckwater collection of pictures.

“This is a portrait of that remarkable person, Dun Scotus, who made a vow to copy out the Holy Bible without tasting bit or drop. And, wonderful to say! he performed his task; but, as soon as ever he came to the final S in ‘Finis,’ he dropt down dead. The picture was taken of him whilst he was in the middle of his undertaking, and is esteemed a correct likeness. The book is in the Bodleian.”

Three days passed rapidly, thus pleasantly employed.

Once more in London, I called for the bill of the play, before I had even looked at the bill of fare. But, as it was needful to dine, ere going to the theatre, I paid the latter document all due attention, taking care to name such an hour for our repast as would not interfere with the more mental feast.

As Mr. Puff says, of the "three morning guns," "Give those players a good thing, and they never know when to have done with it." Covent Garden's one—as a stuttering friend of mine used to call it Co-Cock-Coranation, induced the management to crown a hen—the handsome Mrs. Faucit, as the Empress Elizabeth, in the Exile, which was reproduced with quadrupedal splendour. Daran was one of Young's most effective performances. Maria Foote rolled her lovely eyes in spite, and looked delightfully with all her might, above Alexina's thin muslin sleeves, as if the elbows of so duteous a daughter defied even Siberian crabbedness to chilblain them. Fawcett seemed young as his own Lobski—Meadows succeeded in succeeding Liston, as the "finished traveller;" and Farren was the "dancing Governor," more of which anon.

In the equestrian procession, the English Ambassador was always hailed with cheers, which used to make me bless the Gods. The virtue of

Cosmopolitism may be carried to an unpatriotic excess ; love of country is a prejudice, but I don't envy the philosopher who soars above it.

A factotum of Yates's, named Perrin, was a theatrical supernumerary, a formal old man, with a nasal twang, and a great cause for it. I employed him to brush coats, clean boots, &c. One afternoon he much amused us, by saying to his little patron, who had dined with us—

“ I have done all you required, Mr. Frederick, and now I'm going to the Theatre. The gentleman as plays the Chancellor of Russhee,” he meant the man who walked in the procession dressed as that functionary, “ is took suddenly ill, and I am to go on for his character, at a short notice, with my hair curled, Miss Milley,” so he always called my sister.

I cannot here resist the temptation of recording another speech of Perrin's, begging pardon for the digression. He once astonished me by saying—

“ If you go to see Cherry and Fair-star, sir, be so good as to observe the Galley scene. I am one of them as makes the water for the two ladies, Mrs. W. V. and Miss F. Great exertion, at a shilling a night, to last so long, and flow down so far; do all we can therc's no laying the dust, but they tell me we has a beautiful effect from the front.”

As I hoped to pass some weeks in town, and knew, from long experience, that residing at an hotel was not the most economical arrangement, I secured comfortable lodgings in the 'Adelphi. Our friends soon came about us; the day after we had taken possession of our new quarters, on the departure of one amongst them, our landlady hunted my sister into her chamber, and said—

“ Well, ma'am, I knew Mr. Yates, and Mr. Cooper, off the stage, directly; but I never saw such a difference as dress or daylight makes in Mr. Farren.”

“ Indeed !” quoth her hearer, carelessly.

“ Why, bless me, don't *you* think so, ma'am? At night he looks an elderly man, with light blue eyes, and lips, thin legs and voice, — yet, when I let him in here, just now, I found him the sweetest young gentleman! I showed him to our people, as he went out.”

An indifferent nod was the only reply.

“ I mean when he had been to see *you*, ma'am,” persevered Mrs. Bayley,— “ He told me to say Mr. Farren — thinks I to myself, if you're Lord Ogleby, stage-effect is downright magic.”

The good woman had mistaken the name murmured to her; it did somewhat resemble that of the “ triumphantly careering” comedian, but belonged to

“ Love turned a Lieutenant of Artillery;”

one of the most gentlemanly of our *boys*, in aspect somewhat between St. Pierre's Paul, and Romeo. Our hostess must have fancied a playhouse fairy land, indeed, if she for an instant believed *him* capable of looking like Sir Peter.

The servant maid of this house was one of the civillest creatures possible,—we liked her, and she soon became attached to us, as what follows will exemplify. Letting me in, one evening, she said—

“ I beg pardon, sir, but here has been a man after you—on business.”

“ Where from ? ” I asked.

“ Carey Street, if you please, sir.”

“ What did he want ? ”

“ Why, of course, I don't *know*, sir ; but I was frightened about you — because—”

“ Because why, child ? ”

“ Because — he was rather in a red waistcoat than otherwise.”

The girl had been in our parts, where bailiffs, with disinterested benevolence, wear that badge, by which debtors may know and avoid them. She knew, too, that there were several lock-up houses in Carey Street ; but the caution was needless for me, just then ; and, in fact, the man, as it proved, had brought but a message from my friend Raymond, whose chambers were in the neighbourhood.

The kind damsel, under her first impression, might suppose me obliged to get out of the way, by my departure the next evening for Bath.

I had received a letter from my friend George Charlton, begging me to join him, and some other military amateurs, who were about to perform for the benefit of a veteran officer, whose resources were sadly limited, but whose character was of the highest respectability, and who had seen much foreign service. I was told, by Charlton, that "my celebrity would ensure a crowded house," and that the performances were under the best military patronage of the place; that his father, a General Officer, of my own corps, was anxious to witness my histrionic talent, and that his house and table would be at my command. Of course I could not refuse an invitation so flattering.

The companion of my journey was a charming old lady, whom I afterwards ascertained to be Mrs. Sewell, the widow of a high legal functionary, in our North American colonies.

This dear soul, instead of composing herself to sleep, kept up an animated conversation till dawn of day, recounting many very interesting adventures that had befallen her, both at home and abroad; one of these made a lasting impression upon me, and I shall here relate it.

Some years ago, Mrs. Sewell was posting from

London to Bath, for the recovery of her health, accompanied only by a female relative; a lovely autumnal moon 'was lighting them from Marlborough to *the* Devizes, when a well-drest man rode to the side of their chaise, and courteously pointed out the beauties of the country, felicitating them on the weather, in which they enjoyed it. They could not repulse his politeness; he presently added—

“ You must be brave, ladies, to travel without male protection, considering the state of the road.”

“ I believe it is the finest in England,” said Mrs. Sewell, “ and have heard of no accidents.”

“ Accidents? no, madam! I allude merely to the company which frequent it; but, of course, you would not *risk much*, without armed servants.”

“ Good Heaven!” exclaimed the invalid, “ is there then any danger?”

“ None worth your fear, believe me,” he answered, familiarly laying his hand on the glass-frame, as the chaise descended into a sandy bottom. “ Every thing, my dear madam, may be so arranged that not even your driver need be aware of a gentleman’s necessities. The unfortunate and bold may *take* from men what they are proud to *beg* of the fair. Trifles like these I

reserve to silence-squalling beldames, and meddling postillions. I should be sorry to do any thing disagreeable in *your* presence."

Insinuatingly he revealed a pistol, and bent to his saddle-bow, as he continued—

"It is with great reluctance that I must trouble you for your gold, and any valuables which you may have at hand; that watch, *par example*. Thank you, ladies!" as the trembling women gave up all that he could make portable; "Thank you, ladies. Good evening!"

Very deliberately he rode off; scarcely was he gone when Mrs. Sewell remembered that, in her fright, she had parted with a paper of no use to *him*, but most valuable to her. He had behaved with such urbanity that a strange confidence induced her to bid the post-boy overtake him. This was soon done. Ere she could speak, he smilingly said—

"What, ladies, after one interview with me, seek another? this is a compliment! Your pleasure?"

"Sir," almost laughed Mrs. Sewell, "I am on my way to try the Bath waters for my health."

"No doubt of their efficacy, madam; a charming place—I know it well—perhaps may meet you there."

"Sir, when I tell you that my housewife-case

contains a physician's recipe, for diet and medicines, on which, perhaps, my life depends,—Will you have the civility to look for it?"

"By no means," he cried, handing her the case, "let confidence be mutual between us; abstract whatever memoranda or letters you require—nay, lest you should be inconvenienced at the end of your journey, accept one of your five pound notes—you are perfectly welcome to it—of the rest I will have the honour of taking care."

The poor lady was fain to thank his offer, return him the remains of her coin, and could not, for her life, help bidding him a kind farewell.

Fresh supplies soon reached her in Bath, but she never again encountered this *preux chevalier d'industrie*.

The early hour at which the Mail arrives in Bath allowed me some time for repose; by noon I had made my toilet, and was breakfasting, when Charlton came to the hotel, and introduced me to two or three military men, who were engaged with him in this work of charity. We adjourned to the theatre. A namesake, but no kinsman of my friend, Mr. Charlton, or, as he was called, "Old Saturn," the stage-manager, received us with great politeness; every attention was paid to the rehearsal, and, what was more to the purpose, the box-book was covered with fashionable

names, in the fair running hand of the polite, indefatigable, and handsome Mr. Brownell.

I dined with the General; met a delightful family party. Our to-morrow night's display was, of course, the leading topic. The worthy Major, whom we were thus pleasantly serving, was confined to his bed by gout, or he was to have joined us.

The young ladies of the family played and sang after dinner, and I was asked for a comic song. It happened that I had not long before received, from Mathews, some admirable lines, by Poole, to a popular Welsh air; I was so desirous that the ladies should enjoy the wit of the writer, fancying the melody, if they pleased, that I was "just going to begin," when the impropriety of so doing struck me in a moment. The burden of the song was thus Anglified—"Ah, hide your *nose*!" and to have said or sung such a direction, in the presence of the venerable general, would have been prescribing to him a vast deal of trouble.

The important day arrived—all went smoothly in the morning, and the evening's performance appeared to give great satisfaction.—The ladies and gentlemen of the company vied with each other in supporting the amateurs, and encouraging their exertions. "The Way to get Married" was the comedy, and it may be remembered that there

is such a character in the cast as shop-boy Richard, irreverently denominated "Dicky" by the hero. This said Dicky has some half dozen lines to utter; but the young gentleman, to whom the character was assigned, determined to convince the audience that he was fit for better things; so, instead of condescending to speak in a rustic dialect, he gave the words of the dramatist with an elocutionary precision that created a hearty laugh, *at* and not *with* the aspirant.

His longest speech—

"'Twarn't genteel o' he to take my apurn."

He chose to deliver—

"It—was—not—genteel—in—him—to—take—my—A—prou!"

It was too late, after the performance, to sup at the General's, therefore we had our broiled fowl and stewed oysters at the White Hart; our party including Mr. Woulds, the popular comedian. Although the soul of whim, whilst engaged in his calling, his manners in private life were melancholy and gentlemanlike, till he knew his people well—then he could evince much quaint dry humour; he gained our especial regard by the very handsome things he said about our exertions.

To my great satisfaction the friend who had so kindly attended us over the sights of Oxford had

arrived in Bath, time enough to go to the play ; and with him, the next day, I returned to town.

I was pleased at this, as it afforded my sister an opportunity of hearing a more impartial account of my proceedings than she could have obtained from my lips.

At this period I visited Drury Lane, to witness Kean's *De Montford*. The piece, as originally written, is a highly poetical illustration of a physical antipathy ; but was ever too monodramatic and inartificial to act well. Kean was as unfit as had been John Kemble for the nervous morbid hero ; *en passant*, it is no treason to say that Mrs. Egerton was a great deal *more* unfit than Mrs. Siddons for "the noble Jane," nor did Cooper quite realize our ideal of *Rezenvelt*. Miss Baillie, too, had so altered the last act as to ruin her own best points. Kean voluntarily touched the body of his victim. The *De Montford*, of whom we had read, would have expired of such a contact. No play on *one* passion can be effective for the stage ; the "female Shakspeare," as Mistress Joanna was called, tacitly admitted this fact, by introducing into her plot a degree of adoration—almost unnatural—felt by *De Montford* for his sister. In *Basil*, on "Love,"—the authoress was constrained to let in Friendship, dread of dishonour, and sundry

other auxiliary emotions ; completing, after all, a tragedy which could never be performed with success.

An ex-Fusileer, now a barrister, and joint author of a very valuable work, called on me, to accompany him to the Society of Arts, close to my present residence. After a hearty laugh at Barry's monstrosities—his full bottom wigged absurdities, Fonblanque led me to the model room. One piece of somewhat complicated mechanism attracted my notice—its label bore the following revolting title, "Machine for boring the eyes out."

My shudder at reading this drew from my companion the explanation that the rest of the description had slipped down in the glass case ; the words " of potatoes" would, if seen, have prevented my feeling of disgust at this useful article of farming machinery.

A townsman of our's occupied apartments in the same house—with a branch of his family my sister and self had been intimate, and he passed much of his time with us.

This bold dragoon related to us the following, which, although I cannot call it an anecdote, I must repeat.

A royal personage, now no more, who looked into every thing which he felt it his duty to know, with a zeal rendered welcome to those beneath

him by his accessible urbanity, and *bon hommie*, had once reviewed a regiment which its officers pronounced "Confessedly the best mounted corps in the service."

Its veterinary surgeon took the whole credit of this to himself; indeed he had been so exclusively devoted to his profession that his manners were far more original than polished, considering, that though he had not met with the accident of high birth, in the word's modern acceptation, he must have descended from an equestrian family.

To the gold-laced spurrers of his "Patients, his picturs, his pet-lambs," as he used to call the horses, "his wish was to *pay respect*;" but the loquacity which his zeal prompted added many a curiously flourished *et cetera* to the "your's respectfully," which his sincere and lowly heart subscribed.

The day before this review, an honourable captain, who enjoyed some portion of the Duke's confidence, observed coolly to the doctor, at mess —

"I hope you know that your idol intends inspecting the stables, and all that; you must lionize him."

"I, my dear captain! I 'ave the 'onour and 'appiness to address his Royal 'Ighoess the Dooke o' York? My blessed monarch's second eldest

grow'd up son? Think, captain, my manners——"

"Will tickle him immensely."

"I *tickle*? Sir, I wish to be reverend. I'll Royal 'Ighness him, never fear."

"Pooh, man," returned the waggish captain, "he must be sick of such unvaried style, he has plenty of other titles, remember."

"Oh!" pondered the doctor, "I'll 'ave 'em all by 'art then, in good time. I'll diversify — I'll variegate enough, trust me."

The review went off with splendid *eclat* — no sooner was it over than the Duke, prepared by the captain for a character, required the doctor's escort over the horse nurseries and toilets. All bows and perspiration, our surgeon approached, and entered on his office.

"This way, and please your Royal 'Ighness! every 'ole and corner is kept fit for your august self to eat your 'lustrous dinner off, my princely grace."

"Thank ye, thank ye," nodded the inspector, "what, what? I think something ails that one's fetlock, eh?"

"'Er 'eel, commander-in-chief, it 'ave bin 'urt — poor 'Ermione! she ran away with the 'onourable 'Enery 'Arrison, and jined an 'unt, my 'eir presumptive! he 'it 'is 'ead at the same time. I 'andled 'em both, your serenity! the 'ealing art,

you know — Bend your noble eyes on that 'ere mare, my blood royal ! as 'andsum as she's 'igh. She had a foal last year, as I christened arter your blessed self, my Frederick the Great ! for I pays respect."

" Thank ye, thank ye."

" They say her dam lived to an 'undred, Dooke, don't believe it, cause I warn't her doctor. Ha, ha ! you'll excuse me, my 'Ighness ! but, says I to myself, this wery morning, just to give me courage for your awful presence, I'll turn my back on no man — present company excepted — either for my receipt against the glanders, or for my respect for the 'ouse of 'Anover, my York ! I've three families—wife and children, one ; these 'ere precious beastiss, two ; and the Royal Family, three, my 'ero of 'Olland !"

" Loyal soul !" chuckled his good-natured hearer.

" Yes," continued the doctor ; " I only wish that your Osnaburg bishopric 'ad as many 'osses as there are days in the year, every one on 'em in the last stage of all the diseases under the crown ; see if I udn't cure 'em for you, graciously, my Guelph of the 'Oss Guards !"

A burst of long suppressed laughter, in which even the suite dared to join, cut short the surgeon's eloquence ; he laughed himself ; and the

munificent patronage extended, from that day, by the Duke to his family — left the worthy man no doubt that, on this momentous occasion, he had indeed succeeded in “*paying respect.*”

CHAPTER XI.

VERONESE GENTRY — THE HALL OF IRIS — GOLDEN ELOQUENCE
 — A PAT QUERY — LIFE IN LONDON — A WIDOWER — THE
 FORCE OF FANCY — SHUN TAUTOLOGY — A BARBAROUS LIN-
 GUIST — ACTOR VERSUS AMATEUR — OPERATIONS — CORONATION
 COSTUMES — A FORMIDABLE EPISTLE — MY BARK WORSE
 THAN MY BITE.

I WAS amused by seeing the Covent Garden play bills skewered on a pair of dead muttons, seeming to ticket *them* as “The Two Gentlemen of Verona.”

This drama was reproduced as an opera, and Maria Tree not only sung but spoke as Shakspeare’s self might have approved. Bishop had been more than usually inspired by the sonnets, and the clear enunciation of our Julia did them poetical justice. She looked the disguised pilgrim of love most symmetrically. Jones and Abbot, though gentlemen enough, reminded one not of those in question; the former could not utter “the Nightingale’s complaining notes,” to

appropriate music. Liston narrowly escaped disapprobation by sticking too closely to the "lady's fardingale;" his Crab was a handsome Newfoundland—"ludicrous perversion of the author's meaning."

Mr. Abbot, as Proteus, had to contend with one of the Outlaws, Mr. Comer, a better and a bolder swordsman than his antagonist, who, thrown off his guard by the earnest vigour of the attack, received a cut across the eyes, which, had the weapon been sharp, must have taken the top of his head off. Never from a mortally wounded soldier, never from an hysterical woman, have I heard two such piercing screams as were uttered by Abbot. His executioner ran off, I forget whether before or after this ebullition, whether unconscious of, or frightened at, what he had done. "Beauty Hunt," on the contrary, ran on, almost as instantaneously, and bore the reeling blinded victim away on his broad chest; its cream-coloured dress, as well as this giant Eglamour's white plume, "dabbled in blood."

Ladies cried or fainted, gentlemen ran round to enquire the mischief's extent. Egerton and Jones successively came forward with bulletins.

"Mr. Abbot begged the audience to believe that the affair was purely accidental, and his own fault; its consequences, a surgeon asserted,

would be slight ; meanwhile Mr. Connor would read the rest of the character."

The public considerably dispensed with the remainder of the drama, and many parties left the house. We lavished our praises on Mr. Hunt in the hearing of a female whom he joined before we quitted the theatre.

I inquired next day of " Old Polly in the Hall," where Mr. Abbot lived, that I might call and condole with him. The man replied in choice Cockney, what sounded like

" Eye Terrace, Knightsbridge, sir."

There I learnt that though one of our comedian's lids had been nearly separated, the sight was uninjured. A non-combatant is not obliged to be " too brave," but, if Abbot did not bear the shock like a Spartan, he certainly recovered with a grace ; his chief anxiety seemed that of impressing on all visitors the truth that " poor Tom Comer was as pitiable as himself, an honest kind soul, who had vainly striven to teach Sir Proteus how to make his hand keep his head."

It was by a party of Barristers that I was introduced to the celebrated supper-house of lawyers and lawyers' clerks, the Rainbow, close to the ancient city barrier. The atmosphere of the place was redolent of toast cheese, tobacco, and " spirity liquors ;" the frequenters had acquired a

habit of calling things, from the house downwards, by quaint titles, thus—

“ Yes, I shall blow a Wellington at the Bow, and take a *go* of cold without.”

“ I shall content myself with a rabbit and a *nip*. If you get there first, tell John Colls that I’m coming if any one inquires for me.”

All this was Greek to me. I think I can say few men have up to the present hour less of public house experience than myself, or more aversion to all kinds of slang ; but the men with whom I visited “ the Bow ” were of the highest respectability, their presence sanctioned mine.

It was amusing enough to hear the landlord, the before-mentioned Mr. John Colls, enumerate the various articles consumed ; and, with the precision of Master Bidder, add the sum total.

“ Coming, sir—let me see—two eggscs—two cheescs—two stouts, four punches—no cigars ? So much—thank ye, gentlemen.”

The plural seemed in fashion at this house ; one very priggish gentleman, (who did his utmost to conceal his professional blue bag beneath his military cloak), imagining it constituted by a final *s*, went so far as to call —

“ Waiter ! where *are* my negus ? ”

Many of my readers, doubtless, remember the active and efficient constable who attended nightly

at Covent Garden Theatre, to protect his Majesty's lieges against the insinuating arts of pickpockets, male and female. One evening, between the acts, I was surprized to see this zealous functionary make his way to the front row of the upper boxes, and, holding up his tiny staff of office, thus address the audience.

“ If the gentleman who so misfortunately lost his purse, will apply to me, Donaldson the officer, I will point out the generous individual who so handsomely found it, and so nobly gave it up.”

His speech elicited shouts of laughter and applause. Between the play and farce I encountered him in the lobby, and congratulated him upon his display of oratory.

“ God bless you, sir,” he replied, “ I was only in the performance of my duty ; but I'm vexed—I'm *uncommon* vexed—the purse was picked up by one of our saloon ladies, as good a creature, in her way, you know, as ever wore feathers—she's a poor one too. Well, I pointed her out to the right owner—as I found by his identifying his purse, a brown silk net, with twelve sovereigns, and some silver in it—what d'ye think the shabby mean-spirited fellow did, when he got back the property? So help me, then, he only gave the poor dear girl half-a-crown ; and it has cut me so

much to the heart, that if any gentleman was to say to me, ‘Donaldson, you’re out of sorts, will you take a glass of brandy-and-water?’ I’m d—d if I could refuse him!”

It was impossible to resist so ingenious an appeal; although his accent did not indicate his birth-place, this clever manœuvre was every way worthy the canny north.

Early in the new-year, (1822) Patrick, son to my kind friend Major (now Colonel) Frederick Campbell, was entrusted to us for a few days, to enjoy a play or two. He was a fine boy, about eleven years old. His knowledge of life’s realities — such, too, as he had never witnessed at home, on one occasion surprized me. Circumstances obliged my friend Yates to take a bed at our quarters for a night or so. Pat saw that his fellow-guest was worried; and, on his leaving the room, said to me with the off-hand coolness of a man —

“What’s the matter with Yates? Is he in debt?”

This youngster much delighted in the theatrical amusements he witnessed. By the way, we saw a tragic old man (the Solitary, or the Recluse, I forget which) very *power*-fully acted at the Olympic by a new person, I was assured a young one; little did I dream that this identical Tyrone would represent Irish boys as successfully

in his latter life as he played aged heroes in his youth.

Tom and Jerry was just then the rage—a partly false, partly disgusting series of scenes, at which, nevertheless, one could not help being diverted. The crying sin was that of letting such men, and, above all, such women appear at Almacks. The most masculine, the most immoral blue who has danced in Willis's rooms, whatever may be her dialogue, I do not believe could be capable in public of pantomime quite so Corinthian as Kate's and Sue's.

It was during Yates's sojourn with me that the before-mentioned Perrin broke into his room one morning, crying—

“She's gone, Mr. Frederick, she has departed, sir.”

“Who the devil?” asked Yates.

“Mrs. P., sir—dropsy has done it at last—she lay in my bosom for twenty years, sir.”

“Poor fellow!” yawned Yates, rubbing his eyes, “then go, I shan't want you.”

“That's very kind, sir,” pursued Perrin, without seeming inclined to avail himself of the leave, or rather obey the order for retreat.

“Yes, sir, Mrs. P.—dropsy, sir, for twenty years, Mr. Frederick, she lay in my bosom!”

"And never moved?" demanded the little mimic.

Perrin, with a look of horror at such levity, rushed from the apartment. Yates told us this with some remorse; but added, like a child—

"I must have died myself if I had not said it, the impulse was irresistible. The image was before my eyes! Mrs. P. dropsy and all. Besides, *he'd* never have moved if I had not done something strong. I am very sorry; but 'pon my soul, I could not help it, Benson."

Another proof of his impulsive and imaginative temperament recurs to my memory. Maturin had just sent him "*Melmoth*." Yates was intently perusing it, while I wrote some letters; now and then I looked at him—he seemed positively devouring the volume before him—presently he shook out his kerchief with abrupt vehemence, accompanying the action by that half-articulate sound which we make to drive away an animal—

"Hollo! Frederick, what ails you?" asked I.

"Shoo! shoo!" repeated the reader, "those d—d Peacocks, Benson, but for them I should have——Oh, Imalie!"

It will be remembered that the heroine he named lives on a lonely isle, in a purely natural costume, attended constantly by a body-guard of

Juno's poultry, whose elevated tails, with all their eyes, stand between her fair limbs and the gazing lover. I advised my glowing visionary to study Peeping Tom forthwith.

Yates's reading mania did not soon subside. I recollect his saying, with a provoked air—

“Benson, I'm haunted by myself! One novel which I hired began with, ‘Where is that rascal *Yates*?’—Then I got *Mansfield Park*, and opened at random, to ‘the moment Yates perceived Sir Thomas, he gave, perhaps, the very best start he had ever given during the whole course of his *rehearsals*.’—Lastly, I tried the *Rosciad*. It had just struck me that I should really feel surprized at not meeting my own name in whatever I read, when I stumbled plump upon this line—

“‘And seems to wonder what's become of Yates.’

“It's too bad!”

There was a boyish naïveté in all this that greatly tickled me, and though various events have rendered an intimacy betwixt us undesirable, I am sure my theme, should he read this, will see that I remember, with pleasure, the days when, as he used to express it—“Benson Hill, of the Royal ‘Till, ranked Frederick Yates, with his *play-mates*.”

Although I have not trespassed any of my pri-

vate family affairs on my readers, I may here say that my sister now published her second work, which, like the first, met with high encomiums from competent and impartial judges, who knew not the youth of the authoress.

Thus I became familiarized with the routine of correcting proof sheets, calculating pages, consulting publishers, et cetera, long before I dreamt of doing literary in my own matter-of-fact way.

I was recommended by a friend to “a treasure in the shape of a hair-dresser,” and accordingly placed myself under this artiste’s scientific fingers. He waited on me, but, before he commenced operations, begged to “call my attention to a preparation, which was the result of many years’ application, and that now he had brought it to perfection, he could safely assert, without fear of contradiction, that the Mac-casker and other inventions would cease the opposition of their fruitless competition; he had, by the advice of some classical friends of his, gentlemen from Oxford, called his composition the ‘Oleum Pascens’ — Oleum, he was led to believe, being Latin for oil, and Pasceus signifying *for strengthening the hair, and clearing the head from dandriff*.”

Thus strongly recommended, I could not do less than purchase a bottle of this wonder-work-

ing grease ; the inventor, with a graceful bow, pocketed the three or four shillings which he modestly charged, and then began to pass his comb through my somewhat thick hair. After sundry arrangements of the locks, he demanded in a tone which indicated the interest he felt in his vocation—

“ Do you wish, sir, to have it dressed Hally pruse ? ”

“ ’ Pon my word, I have not the advantage of knowing what you mean.”

“ Dear me, sir ! I thought you spoke French ! beg pardon, but I mean in the same way that the Prussian Allies wear their heads.”

The recollection of the happy days passed with the noble fellows, to whom the *friseur* alluded, was quite enough to gain my consent that he should exercise his calling after the fashion he named.

Mr. Foote, of Charlton Place, whom I have often mentioned, called on me, and stated that he had volunteered to perform, “ gratuitously of course,” for a night or two at Bath, thinking that the manager would jump at so fortunate a chance ; but, to my friend’s amaze, his offer, dubbed “ the experiment of an amateur exhibitor,” had been declined. Charles Kemble was just about to star there for a month.

“ A common player, whom they must pay highly ! such blindness to their own interests ! ”

“ Nay,” said I, “ these fellows think of nothing *but* pelf. They know *he* will overpay *them*, by drawing great houses.”

“ But, Hill, such rudeness to *me*, on whose exertions, condescensions I may say, they had no claim, as have the people of my own district. This ‘ would not be believed in ’—Kent.”

“ Yet think how many miles it is from Kent to Somersetshire. *Your* fame may not have travelled so far, though a mere player’s has done so.”

’Twas strange, not even this soothing strain seemed to heal the wound inflicted on my friend’s self-esteem.

Some amateur actors are horrified if a brother dabbler turns player, and is tolerated ; he must be cut, as unfit ever to have mixed with them.

One of these sticklers for dignity got ruined somehow—tried to redeem his fortunes by commercial speculations — made bad worse — and, chancing to meet a poor comedian, whom he had formerly patronized, said pompously—

“ Give ye my honour — the fact of the matter is this ; you have seen what I can do, and I will ; many gentlemen of less experience, less practice *have* done it ; felt no degradation in accepting

a salary. Yes, my friend, I shall take to the stage — No fear as to success, eh?"

"Why, no, sir," returned the player simply, "you used to drive your *own* horses famously — and many squires *have* turned coachmen."

"Fellow!" exclaimed the would-be hero, "I mean Tragedian."

"Then, sir, I'm afraid you will find it too late in the day for you to acquire ease, grace; besides, *any English* will do for the road, the box — but your's is not at all theatrical, quite too *gentlemanly*, I assure you — I hoped you meant stage *coach*, sir."

A new idea was thus started, and the amateur's mind wavered between the hopes of driving horses out of town, or audiences out of doors. A military friend in whom he *confided* these rival schemes *betrayed* them to us.

Yates and his sister, "me and mine," Raymond and another, had a box at the Opera, close to the stage, to see the new creature, Caradori, as the heroine of "Il Barone Dolshiem." The modest, lady-like blonde, our ostensible object, charmed us, no less did the glorious Ambrogetti, in Brandt. The divertisement and ballet shewed us that perfect beauty, Mercandotti. Yates said she "gave him elegant ideas, and

brought on anxiety of mind." These became by-words for love-fits, ever more, with our coterie.

The first of February, I rejoined at Woolwich, after a somewhat prolonged leave of absence. I found my late residence in Nightingale Vale occupied, and took a house on the Common, commanding a view of the barrack-field, with a distant glimpse of a part of London, below bridge.

Leaving Turner to put up bedsteads, lay down carpets, and other disagreeables, I returned to London. After a late sitting overnight, I had allowed one noon to pass over me in bed. My sister had breakfasted and was dressing, when the servant entered, saying—

"If you please, ma'am, there's a gentleman from Tewksbury—he says he hasn't got not never a card, but that was what I was to tell you."

Isabel guessed at once that our visiter was the Shakspearean Beard; few men but himself would have chosen such a mode of announcement. I was hotly called for, and soon joined the eccentric Thomas. He was glad to find we were on the eve of again settling at Woolwich, and promised to "inflict his tediousness" as often as he could on "Arrybello and bushy-headed Benson."

On the 5th, we quitted the Adelphi. Just as we started, his Majesty left the House, and our Jarvey

got jammed three times in the crowd ; we alighted, hired a porter, and made our way through the mob to Charing Cross, fearing we should be late for the Woolwich coach, but that could not stir neither. In it we sat with patient loyalty, and saw many noble fellow-sufferers shivering in their coroneted carriages. The Gentlemen Pensioners, in their stage—or state dresses, looked queer by daylight, with whiskers and their own hair, without rouge ; their necks accustomed to stock and cravat, took ill to the ruff, which they wore chokingly high and tight ; even the Duke of Sussex looked *Suffolkated*.

Our excellent and ever hospitable friend, Mrs. Colonel Scott, insisted on our sharing her dinner until our own cuisine was in a fit state for operation.

That my new locale was known to some one of acquaintance the following will prove. The second morning after our arrival, Turner brought in a letter, which he strove to deliver undetected by my sister, nor could I wonder at his caution. Its vulgar paper, fold, and thimble seal, were indeed suspicious ; but its direction still more so—

“ Mistr. Captin Bensun Ill Esqr.
Tillery Gentleman Hoolitch
Komon By the baricks.”

My man must have thought me resolved against the *blues*, yet the only contents of this envelope were literary and pious. A tract in verse, called "Thomas Brown, or the Sabbath Breaker Reclaimed." I was not wrong in attributing this delicate attention to dear George Raymond.

It was about this time that Yates, one day, unexpectedly joined us, as we were dismissing our dinner, ordered back for his benefit ; he was on his way to act at Rochester, but Fawcett had refused him the loan of the "Cozening" dresses ; so he came to borrow whatever stage trumpery I had, intending to start by the Paris mail, which would pass over Shooter's hill between one and two, after midnight. He was fagged, excited, thirsty—sleepy. I would not let him harm himself by too much wine, but hoped to revive him by an early cup of tea.

He became babyishly self-pitying—

"Ah, Benson! I've nobody to smooth *my* little path, and toast *my* little muffins. I say, Miss Bell! may I loll on the sofa? na uow!" taking possession of it. "Oh cry! how nice!—Rot old Ashmole, the wardrobe keeper. Benson will pack up *his* for me, and in good time, I know."

So murmuring he fell into a long sound sleep. When he opened his eyes, and saw us beside him, he clamoured—

“I say though, Benson! I hope I’m in time for the coach; Lord, if I should be too late! but I’m not, am I?”

“How should *I* know? or why should I care!” was my churlish retort.

“Na now, Benson! but the portmanteau of things—if that’s ready—here, Turner! we’ll run—I say—”

“And *I* say, sir!” I exclaimed, “do you suppose Mr. Frederick Henry Yates, of the Theatre Royal Covent Garden, that *my* domestic arrangements are to be interrupted, *my* dinner protracted, *my* sofa invaded by your snores, and then that *I* am not only to lend you clothes, portmanteau, servant, but to pack for you, and wake you in time? You suppose that *I* am to do this for *you*? No! nor for any *other* Mountebank that travels.”

Yates’s whooping, hooting laugh proved him incredulous, as to my power of disobliging or scolding him.

“Come here, sir,” I continued, dragging him down to the dining-room—“leave my house! get out of my dwelling—but—*not* ’till you have supped, my Pedzy! ’tis but eleven o’clock yet—and there’s the trunk all ready for you, my little mountebank! I’ll see you off myself.”

What a “dear good Belsol” it was!*

* I believe that Mr. Yates is neither so well nor so merry now as he was then. If these recollections afford him any amusement, I shall be right glad to hear of it.

At his request I ran down, some days after, to Rochester, to play for his benefit,—he thought that a military amateur would attract the officers of the garrison, and he was not disappointed; a large muster of red coats assembled; the star and his soldier satellite were kindly received.

Soon after breakfast my companion, pleading business, left the Inn, and, on the arrival of the hour for starting, he prevailed on me to settle the bill; handing me what he thought his share, but evincing a distaste for returning to the hotel. What his reasons were, he best knows. I imagine some little disagreement with the chambermaid; that personage, on receiving her usual gratuity, remarked—

“Then, sir, the gentleman who slept in 32 doesn’t want his bed again to-night; ’cause, if he should, I must put the place in order. I’m sorry he didn’t come himself, as I’m sure he wouldn’t think half-a-crown quite enough for such a job!”

To this hour I am not aware to what job she alluded, but should my old friend encounter *these* sheets, I have no doubt he will recollect his visit to Rochester.

CHAPTER XII.

A GRAPHIC DATE — A PRECIEUSE — A JOSEPH — A HIGHLAND CATARACT — RETROSPECT AND ANTICIPATION — FLATTERING ENCOURAGEMENT — EVERY BODY'S BETTY — THE GAMESTER — CANDID COUNSEL — REHEARSALS — A SELECT AUDIENCE — FIRST APPEARANCE IN LONDON — MY CO-LABOURERS.

I LEARNT, with deep regret, the death of my excellent friend, Weaver, of whom I have spoken as known to me during my sojourn in Athlone. My informant was Mr. Belson, one of the principal clerks in the Office of Ordnance, in Dublin, and who had lent his aid in the Knighting of the credulous Aldrich.*

Mr. Belson was one of the best amateur artists I ever met; I have heard it affirmed that the very clever and well-known caricature of "Posting in Ireland" was an effort of his pencil, though published with some other name attached to it. With my lamented friend, Weaver, he was in the habit of corresponding, I will not say in hieroglyphics, because all his drawings were deciphered at a glance; they were ingeniously designed, as well as correct in outline. I remember

* Vide "Recollections," &c., vol. i., p. 78.

to have seen a letter of his, with about fifty figures used instead of words ; and where the date would have been written, a groupe of skaters, with some dismounted cannon, lying on a bank in the foreground. If this was not " Ordnance off-ice," why he had wasted his time and talent.

Sir Walter's interesting story of Montrose was brought out at Covent Garden as an operatic spectacle, and ill-complimented by the introduction of quadrupeds. A friend of mine called it " the piece with singing horses."

Fawcett was gravely casting it—

" Allan Macauley—Mr. Abbott ;

Angus Macauley — Mr. Comer ;"

when Egerton, with equal sedateness, interrupted him by—

" I beg pardon — but, pray, is *Miss* Macauley to be in the piece ?"

The idea of that *very* remarkable actress, thus suddenly conjured before the company, created a general laugh, which, for some minutes, suspended business.

" The magic of a name" is resistless with beings so excitable as actors—I have heard another instance of this fact.

Some years ago, a well written historical tragedy, of Italian plot, was sent to Covent Garden. Its hero was placed in situations of great power

and pathos. In one place, wounded and supposed dead, he was concealed by his enemy in a cabinet, from the lattice of which he threw himself, and, wandering about the country, without food, was fain to support nature even on some roots which a peasant had just gathered, and left on the earth, covered by her cloak; this too he appropriated, but was finally slain. Some of the language was very beautiful, especially two apostrophes—one beginning with “Sweet bird!” and the other with “Oh, Moon!” yet, strange to say, the reading of this drama convulsed the company with laughter. The spell lived in a single word — one name, which the author, dead to all ridiculous associations of idea, refused to alter. The title, both of the play and its hero, was *Grimaldi*; its hearers could not banish the image of their old favourite, fighting with the Pantaloon, pretending to be killed, taking a flying leap through a window, frame, glass, and all, bolting stolen carrots, dressing himself up as a costermonger’s wife, flirting with a “Brobdignag cock-canary,” and crying out — “Ah, Mooney!” If the stage direction ran “Grimaldi, dashing aside a tear,” they saw Joe wiping his eye with his foot. The play was rejected; but, so amused had been its auditors, that we believe the managerial expressions of “gratitude for the prefe-

rence shown to that establishment " were quite sincere.

But — to Montrose — Yates, I knew, had a capital part in it, which he had studied with unwonted care. He now wrote requesting me to see him do Ranald of the Mist. I went to London on purpose, called at his lodgings, where the only information to be gained relating him was that he might *perhaps* be found at the Shakespeare, an hotel in Great Russell Street, much patronized by actors and literary men. I went, and there he was ; but, alas, in bed, labouring on dry land under all the uncomfortable accompaniments of ship-board, in consequence of having dined out the day before. Let it be understood that his star (or stomach) was more in fault than he, being so easily affected by wine that, if he exceeded " ladies' allowance," he was — not intoxicated, but ill. It was impossible for him always to remember, while excited by social converse, the necessity for a caution unrequired by his stronger-headed friends ; so that he was frequently censured, when, like Cassio, he deserved compassion.

Seeing him in this plight, I promised to call again, and made a hasty retreat. About half-past six, I returned ; my poor friend was just as bad as I had left him in the morning. What was to be done ? it was too late to send to the theatre

and state his severe indisposition — he must get through his night's work as well as he could, and nurse after it. I called on a chymist close by, and, without saying aught that might degrade the sufferer, requested that some draught might be administered to enable him to fulfil his duty.

Mr. Kiddell, a very intelligent man, said—

“I am glad you came to me, sir. I think, if any one can set him on his legs, I can. I have had no little experience in these matters; many a night have I enabled poor George Frederick Cooke to perform, when he despaired of appearing. I'll give you a mixture in a moment.”

Arm'd with a phial filled with “this cordial Julcp,” I hastened to the bed-side of the invalid, made him swallow the draught, got him up, huddled on his clothes; fortunately, shaving was unnecessary, as the false beard of Ranald would hide his then naturally slight one, of a day's growth. In a coach I conveyed him to the Theatre, assisted him to his dressing-room; the play had begun.

Unluckily, he had left a bunch of keys behind. One of them locked up his wig, paint, &c., but not his stage costume, which I encouraged him to assume, by ordering a biscuit and glass of cold brandy and water, as his refreshment, while I ran for the said keys. Returning with them as quickly as possible, I found him nearly equipped,

but — horror of horrors ! finishing a basin of mock turtle soup, which he had sent for from a pastry-cook's during my absence. Such a dish for a man situated so volcanically !

I went into the front with sad presentiments. At length my friend appeared ; it was evident to those accustomed to his powerful and full-toned voice, that he was not well ; he exerted himself to give it due pitch, and in so doing—the apron of the Countess of Essex can tell the rest. She was at the wing to which he ran, so that few persons saw or heard the exact truth, or knew in what sort of Mist the Ranald was involved.

Cries of “ He's ill, he's ill, drop the curtain ! ” plainly proved the sympathy the audience felt for his malady ; and, to my great relief, not a single sibilation augmented the woes of poor Yates.

Mathews had politely sent me an invitation for self and friends, to be present at the dress rehearsal of his new entertainment. This was too good a thing to lose. Accompanied by my sister, and Miss Emma Yates, who was staying with us, we attended.

The Youthful Days delighted me. The Monologue presented us with the half tipsy, “ and all that sort of thing,” Steward of a public dinner, “ and every thing in the world,”—this character was drawn from life ; had Peake, its author, been

own child to the original, he could not have done it better.

Patrick's day in the evening, I came off what is called "duty for the week." On that day ten years I had been promoted to my first lieutenantcy, having then been three years in the regiment. Spite of this baker's dozen of servitude I found myself only half way up the list, and going through the dull routine which I had performed on first joining. Whilst on active service I forgot the tardy promotion to which I was doomed, but at home it became so irksome that I began to feel an inclination to leave the army. I knew I could obtain half-pay, and I imagined that, by the exercise of any talent I might possess, I could not fail to secure a better income than my military one. Visions of the stage floated before my eyes, pipe-clay became hateful to my sight, play-books my constant companions. I tried to combat this feeling, but in vain; the die was not yet cast; a little patience, gentle reader, and you shall see the game played out.

The next week I dined at the annual meeting of the Drury Lane Theatrical Fund. Here I saw actors mixed up with the magnates of the land; and the countenance given to them, even after they had ceased to amuse, proved that they were not that despised and degraded race of beings some of

my strait-laced acquaintance at Woolwich were apt to consider them.

At this interesting meeting I was introduced to a gentleman, whom I understood to possess great theatrical influence in Bath and Southampton; and, although I was merely presented to him as a military man, he somewhat surprized me by stating that he was aware of my fondness for acting, that he had seen me play at Bath, and heard from other quarters accounts of my successful efforts; he added—

“ I hope no false pride will prevent you from embracing the stage as a profession ; fame and fortune are open to you ; and, if my humble influence can at any time be of avail, I beg you will not scruple to command it.”

All this flattering unction was extremely acceptable to me, as it served to strengthen the bias I found gradually becoming more thoroughly developed.

Two days after this, Yates came down to dine with me ; I told him what Mr. —— had said, and he, if possible, used a stronger language of persuasion. We were engaged to an evening party at Colonel Campbell's, and begged to bring our friend with us. He was most warmly received by the hospitable Colonel, and treated with marked respect by a large assembly. 'Tis certain

that his conduct and manners deserved no less ; but I, who knew the illiberality of many members of my corps, feared that one of these Killjoys might have been present, and, by coldness, or slight, have drawn from the fiery Frederick some violent observation in support of his right to be received as an equal in the best society.

Accompanying Yates to town, I was asked to sup with Raymond, after the opera, and, at his chambers, was first introduced to Mr. Betty, whom I had seen perform, with such delight, sixteen years before. The Roscius, though grown to mature manhood, still preserved the youthful beauty of his face — a more ingenuous, guileless countenance I have never looked on. His voice, which in his boyhood had been silv'ry sweet, had become somewhat weak and husky — but it was one you could not hear without being pleased with the speaker, it was so cordial !

Betty had a “ great respect for the army,” and I soon became his “ dear blessed Captain.” Let it be comprehended that *I* never passed myself off as having attained the stupendous rank thus given me ; but, as only by quoting Shakspeare could any friends excusably say, “ *Lieutenant*, will you drink ? ” — many civilians, especially if actors, bestowed this brevet on me, just as I was most inclined to depreciate and deprecate it ; for

which vile taste I sincerely beg pardon of all
“the Royal Artillery, and *the Band*.”

Betty and I vowed eternal friendship, and, from that moment to the present, have not broken our faith.

On my way to the hotel where I intended to sleep, I was much shocked at meeting Fairfield, whose appearance was sadly altered from the gay being I had once known him. A reverse of fortune at the tables had reduced him to a very low ebb, and he had parted with portions of his wardrobe, to procure the means of indulging in the fatal habit which now appeared to absorb all his thoughts; there was a wildness and uncertainty in his eye, a hollowness in the cheek, that rendered his forced attempts at gaiety really quite ghastly.

During my stay in town I wrote a note to Mr. Morris, the proprietor of the Haymarket Theatre, requesting the favour of an interview. Thus had I taken the first step. On the following Saturday I called on him by appointment, and, after bespeaking his strict confidence, told him my strong desire to try my fortune as an actor, and my willingness to make my earliest effort under his roof.

The Manager heard me with patient courtesy; informed me that his arrangements were already

made for his approaching season ; that he did not think it any way advisable for me to appear in London, till I had gained a little more knowledge of stage business ; a season or two in the country would serve to make me more acquainted with the minutiae of the profession ; and that, should I carry my intentions into effect, he should be happy, when I had gained some practice, to hear from me again.

All this was good advice, and, like all other advice, rather unpalatable. I longed to commence my career in the metropolis, thinking I had nothing to do but appear and secure a profitable engagement. Such ideas sprung from want of experience as much as from the vanity essentially necessary to induce a man to leave any other calling for the stage.

Young Charles Mathews wrote to me, asking if I felt disposed to take a part in a private play, which was about to be got up at the Lyceum, and to be acted by personal friends of his ; to which I replied by signifying my willingness to attempt any character in the lines I was most accustomed to perform. By return of post I heard from Mathews *père*, who said—

“ The part is in English. I think a very good one. It is the damned farce of ‘ Mr. H.,’ which I always thought most unjustly treated. From

having seen you act, with great pleasure, at Woolwich, I pronounced that you, and you only, could act Mr. H. for the private play. The part shall be ready written against you arrive. Pray dine with me on Sunday, and take a bed. One of the amateurs, with whom you have scenes, is an inmate with me — a great advantage. If you will come to the Lyceum on Saturday evening, I will take you home with me. Pray do."

There was no resisting "Pray do!" so I *did* exactly what my friend asked me, was introduced to the amateur, to whom he alluded, a Mr. Gyles, found young Charles full of the play, and heard to my surprise that, "upon this occasion," Mrs. Mathews was about to re-appear upon the stage.

Sir Andrew, (or rather people of his kidney, for the puritanical Baronet had not yet made himself ridiculous) would have said that we desecrated the Sabbath, as the morning of that day we passed in rehearsing away in great force, the spacious picture-gallery serving as our temporary theatre.

A large party assembled at dinner, consisting of Mr. Pugin, the architect, with whom Charles was studying; Mr. Britton, the antiquarian; Mr. Elder, of the Ordnance office; Mr. Knight, the pianist; young Mr. D'Egville; Mr. Henderson; and last, not least, Mr. and Mrs. Liston. Of course, with such varied talent, our evening was a brilliant

one. Mathews was in his best cue, and Liston in first-rate humour.

The early part of the week I devoted to study ; I knew that much depended upon the effect I might produce before a London audience, even though I appeared as an amateur, and I found the part every way worthy of the pains I bestowed upon it. Thursday evening, finding myself "letter perfect," I presented myself to the Master of the Revels to report the same ; Mathews was pleased to say some very complimentary things, touching my zeal in the cause and my attention, but added—

"As usual, accidents have happened to thwart my views, and make me miserable when most I expected to be happy ; in the first place, Charles has been thrown from his horse, and is as lame as a tree ; and poor dear Mrs. Edwin, who was to have been your heroine, is dead — hoarse. What we are to do I don't exactly know, but that good creature Dick Peake is hard at work to overcome our difficulties. To-morrow we have a rehearsal, and I hope things will turn out better than they promise at present."

In this I cordially joined, as it would have been a bitter disappointment to me had the performance been postponed.

The following morning I heard, with sincere regret, that Mrs. Edwin still continued too ill to

appear ; but that a lady, Mrs. Weippart, would *read* the part—this was a damper ; however, all the other persons in the piece were perfect ; and I looked forward to the evening with pleasure, not unmingled with anxiety.

In compliment to Mathews's gastronomic admonitions, I had ordered "roast beef" for my dinner ; but I found that my appetite was seriously affected by the state of nervous excitement I endured.

Yates, who joined my sister and self, said and did all that a friend could to induce me to take my usual quantity of substantials ; his powers of persuasion failed. I felt desperately inclined towards a glass or two of champagne, but my experienced adviser would not allow me to add fire to flame, and stinted me even in the quantity of sherry and port.

Under his direction, I repaired early to the theatre, that I might get dressed and collected before I faced the lamps. As soon as I had attired myself, and of course I took more than usual pains with my toilet, I stole a peep at the audience, and certainly never looked on a similar one in any theatre. No places having been reserved, parties pleased themselves as to situation when they severally arrived, the boxes were consequently filled with the first comers, whilst the pit, and

even the gallery, was occupied by rank and fashion, who did not break through the rule of going late to the play. Feathers and diamonds were to be seen where they had never waved or sparkled before ; and the pit contained almost all the “noticeable” writers of the day.

Party feeling was dismissed, and Tory and Whig sate on the same benches. In those good old times these were the only two political distinctions, with the exception of the blacking-making Lord of the Manor of Glastonbury, who enjoyed in his person the incarnation of Radicalism. Such an auditory was a goodly sight to look on, but somewhat formidable to encounter. The ingenious Prologue to the comedy was to have been spoken by Mrs. Edwin, but the audience were apprized, by printed notices, that it would be read by “Mr. H. in person.”

The three chords, which to my unmusical ears appear to finish every overture, were duly given, the tinkle of the Prompter’s bell sounded, and with “considerable nervousity,” as Mathews called it, I stepped forth. A most gracious reception was afforded me ; and I read the opening Address with as much “good emphasis and discretion” as I could command.

The Rubicon was passed ; I found all my self-possession restored—the piece commenced. Mr.

Gyles enacted the Landlord with much humour. One of the waiters gave his replies as though he had served for seven years at Old Slaughter's; but the other, from fright, was converted into a dumb waiter; that is to say, not a syllable of what he had to utter being audible, even in the orchestra. Mrs. Weippart did all she could, under the disadvantage of a short notice, to render *Melissinda* as agreeable to the audience as to her lover; the Lady visitors kept up the scene whilst the chirpings of Betty Finch set the audience in a roar. The very long speech in which the hero recapitulates a thousand names, all more easily borne than his unhappy paternal appellation, was warmly applauded, and would have deserved it more, but that, whilst in the midst of it, I caught sight of a popular comic actor sitting in the stage-box, whose face was fearfully portentous, and the expression thereof any thing but encouraging. The burst of laughter which followed the unhappy slip made by the self-tormented hero, when he accidentally betrays the secret which he so long guarded, that his name is *Hogsflesh*, was delightful, and soon drove from my recollection the stony visage of the unmoved professor.

A vaudeville, designated the "*Comedian d'Estampes*," followed, in which young Charles sustained a character throughout in imitation of

Perlet, and succeeded admirably. His song was deservedly encored; it was difficult to say which merited the greatest praise, his dramatic or operatic talent.

“Werter” closed the evening’s amusement; the mother and son playing the two principal characters. The German costume became Mrs. Mathews, and she cut bread and butter as though she had been born in the Sandwich Islands. This being, I believe, the only occasion on which Mr. Richard Brinsley Peake trod the boards, it would be unpardonable not to mention that his personation of a Postillion was about as rich a bit of quaint humour as ever was witnessed, and that his dress from queue to jack-boots was most appropriate.

Before midnight the private performance concluded, and all my cares on that score being ended, I determined to make ample amends for the abstemiousness I had practised at the dinner hour.

CHAPTER XIII.

A MADE MAN—I HAVE MY TRIALS—A GODFATHER—SUBSCRIPTION EPISTLE — A DINNER SCHEME—THE BEST GUESTS—GOING WESTWARD — THE CANTWELLS — RAYMOND'S BURLESQUE—ARTISTICAL CHAT—JAVA POISONS.

A RATIONAL being would have retired to bed after enjoying an excellent supper, but I listened to the persuasions of my friend Yates, and long after midnight was introduced to a society called, with justice, "The Eccentrics," then holding high change. The president was the well-known Mr. Brownley, who for many years acted as parliamentary reporter to the Morning Chronicle, and of whom it was observed by Fox, or Sheridan, that he possessed talents of such high order, his station should be in the body of the House instead of the Gallery.

He duly inducted me into the mysteries of the society; and it may be worthy of remark that it was the last time he ever filled the chair as

President; fell Sergeant Death laying his hand upon him very shortly after the evening to which I allude.

The members of this odd assembly were principally gentlemen connected with the press, a tolerable sprinkling of barristers, and actors. Without being absolutely a debating society, the Eccentrics gave ample opportunities for speech-making, and I have heard some noble specimens of oratory from the leading members. Political and religious topics were studiously avoided; the object of the debate being to give, to the trivial events of every-day life, a consequence and importance that called forth all the powers of the speakers.

Mock charges were brought against individuals, supported by plausible evidence — then refuted by other witnesses; and the apparent fact being nearly proven, its possibility was defended or excused, with a liberal, lenient, philosophic Bulwerism, which some stern moralist, in *his* turn, decried as tending to undermine, not only public laws, but private virtue.

All this might spring from the question whether some harmless beef-eater was or was not a vampire. Many of my friends talked themselves into fits of serious indignation, as if life and fees depended on their words. Per contra, some

speakers, "who, inclination fondly took for taste," delighted us by their blunders. When listeners, lacking self-possession, were inclined to laugh, Raymond's agitated "Bravo! hear, hear," and Graham's simple "Hush, silence!" would re-assure the unconscious ass, and spur him to fresh capers.

Mr. Longueville Clarke, now a judge in India, and Mr. Aichbawn, the barrister, were also among the most popular of the speakers, and not a few members of the British senate but might have envied the easy flow of language and the graceful delivery so constantly to be witnessed in this pleasant society.

From Yates I learnt that a new opera, from the pen of George Colman, was about to be produced. I was aware that my friend enjoyed the intimacy of the author of "Broad Grins," and was much amused by learning that, when the dramatist first mentioned the forthcoming piece, he said —

"I think, by Gad, I have written a very telling part for Young, but I have not yet given it a name. My pagan hero wants to be christened, Freddy. Let us think of some outlandish, long winded, large-tongued name, such as dear Charles's silver trumpet would give forth nobly, eh?"

Inspired by the image, Yates, in Young's own voice, uttered—"Parbaya!"

“Capital, my boy! Parbaya be it then! a melodious, yet energetic title. As Young-y as aught he ever breathed of ‘Pultowa’s field,’ or the ‘Aulic Council.’”

The play was to be called “The Law of Java,” and Yates asked me if I could obtain for him any authentic costumes, as he knew such would be very acceptable to Mr. Colman. It happened that our regimental library had just received Sir Stamford Raffle’s History of that Island, containing a vast variety of illustrations, not only landscapes, but groupes of the inhabitants of all grades, and in varied dresses; of these I made coloured copies, and, before the play was read at Covent Garden, sent them to my friend.

Within the week after my appearance at the Lyceum, I received a humorous and cleverly-written letter, the joint production of the three Mathewses, Mr., Mrs., and young Mr., including a postscript from their friend, Mr. Gyles. One portion of this quadruple epistle I cannot resist introducing here, for reasons that shall hereafter appear.

“If it is any satisfaction to you, in addition to the unbought, and not to be mistaken tribute of a delighted audience, to receive the sincere commendations of a Lamb (don’t look sheepish), the author expressed his unqualified approbation of

your acting, and said, if Mr. H. had been as well acted on its first representation, the piece would have met a different fate. Upon my life, 'tis true !”

Mrs. Mathews continued.

“ What will you lay it's a lie? But, jesting apart, every body says you were a *Capital H*, and that no letter in our alphabet had any chance with you, which *I* attribute much to my diamond ring” (which *I* had worn); “ it is, however, difficult to determine which shone most !”

Whilst mentioning letters, let me state that Mathews wrote a peculiarly legible hand; his punctuality in the discharge of epistolary debts was exemplary; he could not tolerate an absence of this virtue in others.

“ Some of the fools,” would he say, “ will tell ye that they've *no time* to write; yet they can find time to eat, drink, dress, do a million things of no earthly importance, and then, by Heaven! go to sleep, with one sin against civility, and another against veracity, on their *consciences*, if they have any. Isn't it abominable?”

The kind-hearted Harry Betty had been for some time stopping at Chedron's Hotel, Leicester Square; and, finding his *padrone* a worthy obliging person, was desirous to do him a good turn.

“ I am thinking, my dear Captain, we could get up a dinner. I know a dozen or two capital chaps who would join me. I’ll write to them all, and if they will give me their names, I’ll take the trouble off their hands. Little Chedron has the best cook in London, and you know his wines are excellent ; so, do beat up for recruits against Sunday the 5th of May. Dinner, wine, and desert, one pound one. Gentlemanly, and not extravagant.”

I promised to name the intended spread to my friends, adding that Betty might count on me for a certainty.

The day arrived. At seven o’clock I repaired to Leicester Square, and perceived that the founder of the feast was in a state of considerable perturbation, in consequence of having received so many excuses, after he had, in his zeal for his friends, and desire to serve his host, ordered, as he said, “ a banquet for the Gods ;” no apartment at the hotel being large enough to contain the expected party, a spacious auction-room in the neighbourhood was fitted up for the occasion.

When I reached Chedron’s, Captain Dobbyn and Mr. Tyrone Power were the only persons assembled ; to these I was introduced. Yates and Raymond soon followed, and the true blue

eye of Roscius sparkled with increasing lustre as the *party* increased. Mr. Douglas Guest, an historical painter, arrived, and was warmly welcomed ; then came the gay and fascinating Tom Best, bringing with him a West India friend, and then half an hour passed, and not a single arrival. Dinner was announced as being on table, across the Square, and Betty, endeavouring to conceal his mortification, said—

“ Well, if that be the case, we must make the best of it — don’t let us be dull and dignified, as if we were a pack of Yahoos, done brown by defeat ; now then set forth the dismal cavalcade !”

We found covers laid for forty, and the table spread with the choicest viands. No sooner were we seated than Raymond, anxious to cheer the depressed spirits of poor Harry, remarked—

“ We are exactly the number prescribed by Lord Chesterfield, and I hope, Betty, you will not take upon you the part of the Tragic Muse.”

Power, who at that time had not dreamt of “ Teddy the Tiler,” was melancholy and gentlemanlike in the early part of the evening, in compliment, I presume, to the presence of his friend, the Captain, who was a great stickler for the etiquettes of society, and who had little relish for the broad comedy of real life.

But the man who kept up the ball, and whose joyous manners soon became contagious, was Mr. Best; he drew out the comic characteristics of all present. Under his skilful management Betty was consoled for his disappointment; Yates "*sung*" to us, and gave imitations in his best style. Raymond made speeches worthy of the bench or bar; Guest was eloquent upon the Fine Arts; the gentleman from Jamaica favoured us with Negro songs and sermons, talked most feelingly about emancipation,* and spoke with great *affection* of Wilberforce; Power related some adventures which had befallen him whilst lion-hunting in Africa; Dobbyn, knowing Betty's love for the glorious art of war, described to him the last cavalry movements; and, in short, the party which had assembled under such strange auspices, broke up highly delighted with one of the most agreeable days that had befallen them.

Early in the month I dined with Major R——, for the express purpose of meeting his son-in-law, George W——, of whom I have made frequent mention in my first volumes. The reader may recollect that he is there described as a wild young man, who thinks of little else than the gratification of his own passions, regardless of the miseries he may entail upon himself or the objects of his pursuit. I had heard that George

—— was reformed, and, as I knew he was married, I rejoiced to learn that so desirable a change had taken place, but I was not prepared for the extent of his reformation.

With a rational, unostentatious aspect of steady piety and moral conduct, the rake-holly George —— was not satisfied; no — he, like Mawworm, was “pretty sure he had had a call,” and determined to give outward and visible signs of this inward and spiritual grace. His hair was combed straight over his forehead, his face had become pale, not from fasting or prayer, but the effects of his early debaucheries; he affected a plainness of attire, and, from his breast-pocket, peeped a brazen clasped bible.

He received me with great coolness, and was not a bit more cordial with my friends, Raymond and Yates. He would not hazard his precious soul by sitting at the same board with his father-in-law and the profane guests invited, but was found seated bolt upright, with a volume of Calvinistic lore in his hand, when we joined the ladies at coffee.

Quadrilles were got up, at which W—— looked scandalized; but one young lady appealed to Raymond for a waltz, saying—

“Pray let us waltz, let us, pray!”

“Let us *pray*!” echoed *my* George, falling on his knees.

He again blistered his uncongenial namesake that night ; Mrs. W—— passing from one room to another, let her shawl drop from her shoulders. My friend offered to arrange it — the lady, “ not caring to have a *man* so near her——” declined, when, with clasped hands and elevated eyes, he drawled—

“ Thy service is perfect freedom.”

He would not, I am sure, have been so “ tender and profane too o’ my conscience,” had he believed in the efficacy of either W——’s *faith* or *works*.

Nesfield, of whom I have previously spoken, had left the army, and devoted himself exclusively to the Fine Arts ; he had often expressed an earnest desire to be made known to Colonel Cockburn, of our’s, whose magnificent views of Rome, and splendid work on Pompeii, had placed him at the very top of the list of amateur artists ; I signified the wish of Nesfield to the Colonel, who, in his usual unaffected kindly manner, accepted an invitation to meet his brother brush at my humble board. Nesfield had brought some recent sketches with him, for my inspection solely ; and it was with difficulty I could persuade him to allow me the gratification of bringing them under the Colonel’s notice. They were deservedly admired, and our evening was pleasantly occupied in dis-

cussing the rise and progress of water-colour painting, from old Paul Sandby, down to Prout, Copley Fielding, Varley, and others whose pencils had produced such magical effects.

Be it remembered that, at this period, Cattermole, Lewis, and Hunt, had not charmed the world with their beautiful productions, or they would have been named as worthy associates of the artists, whose works we had been praising.

My sister and self attended the first representation of "the Law of Java." The long received fable of the Upas Tree, on which Colman had founded his play, had been completely contradicted in the work from which I had copied the Costumes.

Certainly, the Drama was a strange jumble. Parbaya was glorious; his godfather and parent retained a family likeness of delivery. Liston looked irresistibly; but the grand affair was Maria Trec's victim *Scena* of "Tyrant, I come." I confess I am not musical, but the novelty here introduced of an unseen band playing behind the scenes a march to the place of Execution, at the same time that the orchestra in front accompanied the singer, produced an effect thrilling, electric! Success crowned the night.

Yates, his sable stains adhering to parts of his brown hair, supped with us. We told him

he had looked as like a little black cook as Garrick could have looked like the little black boy with the teakettle; but we added, justly, that he had played in a very David-ish way, too.

Abbot, who personated the Emperor of Java, had been asked during the evening if he was pleased with his part, and if it afforded him any opportunities for gaining applause; to which he replied—

“Why, I think the Imperial dignity of *my* appearance will insure me three rounds, as soon as I am discovered on my throne; but the audience will even then find out, that, as to the play, it is but a cock-and-a-bull story.”

The fact was, the wag alluded to very large golden images of these creatures, placed at the foot of the seat of Royalty, doubtless from the best “authority.”

CHAPTER XIV.

FULL DRESS—HIBERNIAN BLOOD—BILLY—THE READING—THE RIVAL EARLS—IVY COTTAGE—FAMILY JARS—THE HAY-MOW—MY HORSE—REVIEWERS REVIEWED—MIMICS MIMICKED—HIGH TREASON.

ABOUT this time I received a note from dear Harry Betty, promising to call on a certain day with a friend of his, Mr. Jenkins, as they wished to consult me, "on matters vital to the state." I wrote back an invitation to dinner, adding, that my sister would be delighted to make acquaintance with Roscius.

On the appointed morning, at a somewhat early hour, I heard a carriage stop at my door, and, looking out, beheld a pale, gentlemanly youth, in pantaloon trowsers, alight with my Harry, whose togafied cloak falling aside, betrayed black silk stockings and tights, white waistcoat and cravat, a light blue coat, with some club or fancy button. Hastening to welcome them, I saw an air of more

than usual importance in Betty's handsome peony and golden-whiskered face.

"The lady sister, my blessed captain," he began.

I lost no time in presenting him to Bell, and, after a few old-school compliments, he said—

"My dear captain, I've something to propose, to which I hope you will agree. But you must let me tell my story in my own way. Last night, Captain Augustus Dobbyn, Tyrone Power, and my friend Billy," pointing to Mr. Jenkins, who appeared quite accustomed to be so named, as he smiled and bowed at the abbreviation, "we were talking over the dreadful state of the poor dear Irish; 'my blood doth flow from brave Mercutio's wounds,' starving in *their* own land, dying by inches, owing to the failure of the potato-crop, and we all felt anxious to do our little damndest, or blessed-est rather, my dear madam, to relieve the noble creatures. Well, I need not tell you we're none of us overburthened with the rascal counters, and what we could subscribe wouldn't buy a meal's victuals for more than a dozen out of the thousands who are perishing, like so many Otways and Jane Shores—or citizens of Calais; so, after laying our heads together on this terrible affair, Augustus Cæsar—Dobbyn, I mean, said, or should have said, 'The play's the thing in which

to catch the—sum we want to bring’—for the benefit of the Irish. We all liked the notion vastly, and then began to think of whom we could enlist in the glorious cause; your name was one of the first upon the file, and it was resolved, *nem. con.*, as we used to say at Cambridge, that I should call on you, and ask if you would join us in our work of charity.

“So this morning early I ordered posters to be put to the Purple,* giving the Hector horse a holiday, and prevailed on Billy” — (here another smile and bow followed the repetition of the gentleman’s pet name) “to accompany me; and now, my blessed captain, give us your aid and counsel. I have brought down a couple of plays, great cards of mine; if you will allow me to show you the cast, and read portions of them to Miss Hill and yourself, we shall be able to come to a decision about what the play *is* to be; that will be a great point gained.”

To this arrangement I consented, with the proposal, that after dinner, over a glass of wine, we would resolve ourselves into a Committee of Taste.

* The *Purple*, so the ci-devant Roscius called his carriage, a large vehicle, in which, at the period when he played twice a day, as, for example, at Glo’ster in the morning, and Cheltenham in the evening, he has often changed his Douglas dress for the more homely tartan of young Norval, in which to begin the tragedy a second time.

Meantime I escorted my friends over the Arsenal and Repository.

We dined early, my sister soon left us, but Betty would not read till we rejoined her, as he did so, saying—

“ ‘There was a time when Warwick needed not *his* aid to gain admission here ’—that is, my darling madam—to *such* as you—you must have been a very little chap at the time of my row. I was but a valiant Thumb, myself. Since then, you see, I’ve not been so much mixed up with the dark-eyed maids of Spain — so I rather shied the lady sister,—but, by the Lord, I found you so accordant, I see I can still make myself conformable—in fact, you are a capital fellow! I wish we could make you an *Eccentric*.”

“ You do me too much honour, Prince William Henry,” replied my sister, laughing.

“ Not a bit, serves you right, very much right—so help me to decide between two earls — Warwick and Essex.”

“ Then read Essex first : for, after Warwick, though that is not good, the other would be rather unhappy than a favourite.”

“ How just you are ! sweet saint. Stand clear, Billy, here goes.”

Parts of both the tragedies named were appropriately spouted to us by Betty ; his own vein of

fun frequently marred the pathos. There was a line like —

“ England shall find she has a friend in Essex.”

“ Now *you*,” he said, “ living so handy, must have *lots there*.”

But when he came to something about

“ Tyrone has promised us a mighty power,”

he shouted—“ Tyrone and Power ! a mighty auspicious promise for the Paddies.”

After due deliberation on the respective merits of Essex and Warwick, the latter was declared *the* favourite, and the names of the persons intended to sustain the parts over and over again reiterated. Now and then Betty would express his fears lest his troop would not prove loyal after the following fashion—

“ If dear Augustus should be dignified, or Temple prove a recreant knight, captain, we are done brown ! Billy ! do *thy* devoir ! for well thou know'st two rules are, Guiscard's !”

Calming his fears, I promised to attend a full mote early in the ensuing week. After taking breakfast with me the next morning, I saw my friends safely ensconced in the Purple on their way to town, bearing my promise to join the project proposed.

I had not seen any of my friends at Ivy Cottage

since the "Mr. H." night; a note from them being equally inviting with the day, I walked to Highgate, Kentish Town, or wherever Mathews was pleased to lay the *venue* of his residence.

Instead of the reception which on all former occasions had awaited me, I found Mathews in an awful state of gloom, his eyes bore evidence of recent tears, and his voice was so tremulous that he could hardly articulate the words of welcome, he, in spite of appearances, tendered me. I was alarmed, and eagerly inquired for his wife and son.

"Oh, they are both quite well, I thank you," he replied with a bitterness of tone and manner that surprised me; "*I* am, as usual, the sufferer—I think I *have* told you that if ever I set my heart upon any particular object or design, something is sure to happen. However, don't stay here; if you have the least charity, walk with me round the grounds; the house is a Hell to me at this moment, what with the begging pardon on one side, and being accused of obduracy on the other; let me at least take advantage of your arrival, and try to forget my annoyances."

We rambled about his beautiful little domain; I endeavoured to bring him back to his usual cheerfulness, by praising all the various improvements which had taken place under the tasteful

direction of Mrs. Mathews; he clicked his tongue in his mouth, but made no other use of it till we came close to a large hay-rick, the produce of his own fields.

“Do you see that?” he asked, pointing towards the mow.

“Yes, and I congratulate you on feeding your own cattle from your own farm.”

“Cattle? yes! horse — races — it sounds very pretty, and vastly agreeable, no doubt, but I ask you, do you see *that*?”

“To be sure I do, my dear sir; I were blind else.”

“Then give me leave to tell you, you see the best friend I have in the world. Yes; nobody thinks of hunting me out *there*. I can go and sit down at the bottom of that hay-rick and cry by the hour; that’s what *I* call luxury, nobody to interrupt me — no pestering sympathizing friends to plague me with their damned provoking — ‘What *can* be the matter? Why surely *you* have nothing to vex you,’ and all that beastly commonplace stuff, as if I hadn’t *more*, a vast *deal more* to bear than any other living man I ever heard of. Why this very day ——.”

Now, thought I, I shall know the cause of all this distressful dolour.

“This very day, after having implored, begged,

entreated, all but cried, and commanded Charles never to attempt to mount my grey horse, the only animal I ever could cross in the course of my life, with comfort to myself—a creature made on purpose for me—*he* must needs disobey, take the poor animal out of the stable, over the country, the Lord knows where, and brings him back with a pair of broken knees—knocked to atoms, ruined—had thrown the poor creature down—he never even tripped with *me*, and here I am without a horse to go to Epsom on.”

“Poor fellow!” I exclaimed.

“Poor fellow!” repeated Mathews, “who d’ye mean; me, or the horse?”

“Why, neither; I was pitying Charles, who I know must be suffering dreadfully, from having fallen under your displeasure.”

“You may spare your pity—although he has had some slight punishment, a roll in the road, and a few bruises; but *his* knees are not broken; I wasn’t going to ride *him* to Epsom!”

In such a mood ’twere vain to offer any observation connected with the subject of his regret. So, begging him to let me take advantage of daylight to look at some additions to his gallery, I left him to chew on’t.

In about an hour he joined me, somewhat more calm and collected than he had been; whether or

no he had sought the consolation of the hay-rick, I did not inquire, but proposed, since he was not in his accustomed spirits, my return to town.

“No, you won’t, I thank you; you are the only person to whom I have told my sorrows, and I sha’n’t let you go. We have some people coming, whom I know you will like; but even if that were not the case, it would be absolutely cruel in you. Broken knees! No Epsom!”

In the hope of diverting his thoughts into another channel, I asked if he had read a critique upon a new farce, that had been roughly and somewhat unjustly handled, in one of the morning papers.

“Dear George Colman,” he raved, “never wrote any thing finer than his ‘Ode to We.’ That ‘Plural Unit,’ a hired critic. The notion of *one* man pretending to be legion, doing the royal pronoun in a garret, or a pot-house; telling the public not only what it *ought* or ought *not* to do, like, dislike, or care about, but even telling it what it *does*, and what it *never* does, in spite of its own convictions—daily experience. ’Tis worse than nose led; ’tis driven open-eyed by a cat of nine *lies*—I mean it *would* be, if it did not judge fairly, and laugh at three-fourths of the WE’s without identity, US, with no selves of our own, who presume to say, or rather write anonymously, ‘*we* differ from Hunt, Hazlitt disgusts *us*, Lamb out-

rages *our* taste.' Pooh, fiddle! et cetera, as Dan Terry has it."

I was repaid for my consent to remain, by having the pleasure of meeting, amongst the guests, the celebrated Mr. Adolphus. But, before I speak on any other subject, I must mention that, whenever Charles was asked for by any of the party, Mathews by signs referred the querist to me, to account for the absence of his son.

While we were in the gallery, one of the persons present praised Yates's imitation of Young. I saw that Mathews's nerves were at work, by his setting every thing straight and square on the table before him.

"Young," he exclaimed, "best of fellows! elegant, witty, moral, affectionate, pious, loyal, has but one fault, never had."

"That of liking Yates's imitation of him?" asked a gentleman of the party.

"No, no, he *don't*,—he may say so, but he can no more like *it* than it can be like *him*. His only crying, or rather shrieking sin is that he will 'thmooth' down letter-paper with his nail, to split it into note. 'Thmooth?' Now, if there be one noise on earth more infernally detestable than another, it is that confounded *cree!* and though I've told him fifty thousand times that it always drives me mad, destroys me, begging, entreating, all but

going on my knees to him not to do it, at least, within a mile of *me*, still he perseveres ; and what is most provoking, vows in his ‘thweet’ placid manner that *every* time I tell him is the *first*. He deserves—but, no ! Charles—Young is a human being, he does *not* yet deserve to be libelled by the mimicry of a filthy Marmoset. Why some of the brutes even call that nasty little viper’s ME—like ! Very !—I’ll shew it ye. Look at this !”

Here exaggerating his own halt, and caricaturing his own brow, mouth, &c. &c. he “waw waw’d” a few words, then cried—

“There, that’s Yates’s Mathews. Now I ask any candid person who ever happened to see the original, is *that* one atom like *me* ?” He seemed to forget that, as he did it himself, it could not choose but be a little like him. He huffed his dinner, and snubbed his dessert. On some greengages and hock being placed near him, he cried—

“No, thank ye, no cold stomach-aches and Gowland’s Lotion for me. I am ill enough already, labouring under a complication of diseases. Nose-hunger, and can’t relish a pinch of snuff ; drunk yesterday, and *wasn’t*—never am ! and yet I feel as if I had been—*beastly*.”

After dinner, Mr. Adolphus, premising that he had been employed as counsel for the Cato Street conspirators, produced the autographs of such of

these unworthies as could write. He explained that, on the night previous to their execution, he had visited the unhappy men, and requested each of them to give him some slip of writing, as a remembrance of their having been his clients.

“ You perceive,” he said, “ what an excellent, legible, and gentlemanly hand their leader, Thistlewood, wrote—how steadily he formed these characters—although perfectly conscious that it was the last time he should ever hold a pen. *This*, now, is very creditable to the black man; but *this* is curious; here is a strong exemplification of the force of habit, and the strange materials of which human nature is composed. The man must have cherished some vague hope of escaping the capital punishment; and, under that impression, did not like, as they say in the Old Bailey, ‘ to throw away a chance;’ the Gods, you see, had made him poetical, in this wretched jingle of four lines—with the almost certainty of death for high treason in the course of a few short hours, he had not the courage to express himself at full, but vents his impotent rage on ‘ S——th and his bl——y crew;’ the fellow dared not write Sidmouth or sanguinary at full length. With the gibbet and the axe then in preparation for him, he boggled at a libel !”

CHAPTER XV.

A GREEN RETREAT — PROCRASTINATION — THE CÆSARIAN OPERATION — A LOVE LETTER — PIERCING EYES — FEMALE COUNSELLORS — PAINTERS, POETS, AND PLAYERS — I'D BE A BUTTERFLY — A LADY'S FEARS — A WOMAN'S REASON — IRON-Y.

OUR deliberations upon the intended play went on, and Windsor was the scene of action selected. One of the most zealous of the committee was Mr. Frederick Green, a gentleman who had been a deserved favourite on the Bath stage, but, having married a lady of fortune, sister to Lord Hawke, was now enjoying his otium in a delightful house, Hinde Street, Manchester Square.

To his residence our whole party adjourned after a long debate, as to *when* the play was to take place; and, although invited to a biscuit and glass of negus, were shortly seated to the best impromptu supper possible. Mr. Green possessing as much good taste as hospitality — his wines were of the first quality, and it was at a very advanced hour in the morning that our party broke up.

The result of our last night's deliberation was that Betty should proceed to Windsor, and take upon himself the issuing of announce bills, using his best influence to procure the patronage and attendance of the gentry of the town and neighbourhood.

It would be vain to attempt the description of the thousand and one obstacles that presented themselves to retard our charitable intentions. Promises of support one moment, and desertion the next — suffice it to say that few out of the many who had been so zealous, as far as mouth-honour was concerned, fulfilled their engagements.

Betty was perfectly unaware of this state of affairs — he had been nearly a fortnight at Windsor, and subjected to the annoyance of more than one change in the day announced; but, hoping his friends would keep faith, was regardless of expense in giving due publicity to the intended benefit.

The first intimation he received of treason in the camp, was that, beneath his bed-room window, as if just thrown in, he beheld a large and legibly-written scroll; this he eagerly seized and read—

“ Betty! beware of Wathen. Take heed of Temple. Come not near Kenneth. Have an

eye on Millington. Trust not Smith. Mark well Augustus Dobbyn. Benson Hill loves thee not. Thou hast wronged Billy Jenkins. There is but one mind in all these men, and that is bent against Betty. If thou be'st not immortal, look about thee.

“ Thy lover,

“ ANNO MIRABILIS.”

I can well imagine the effect produced by this billet; but the fears of my friend were somewhat allayed by the arrival of the chosen few who had kept their faith. No sooner had we assembled than Roscius produced the Shakspearian document, “half pleased, and half afraid,” all curiosity to detect the Soothsayer among the so-called Conspirators; but the warning voice came from far, and although it was never discovered who it was placed this caution in our Cæsar’s way, I subsequently heard Betty address my sister —

“ Ah, Madam ! ‘ thou hast wrong’d Billy Jenkins.’ ”

An accusation by no means deserved, but elucidating the source of this mysterious papyrus.

The theatre was tolerably well filled; but it was evident that the postponements had created disappointment, and doubts as to the performance really taking place, which had seriously militated against the overflowing house the sanguine Harry antici-

pated. He was in glorious spirits, and his personation of Warwick elicited great applause.

A trifling circumstance occurred which I cannot resist mentioning. Amongst a variety of curious letters in Mathews's possession, I had seen one written by a fond husband, in Dublin, to his beloved wife, then playing at the Haymarket theatre, proposing that, at the end of her engagement, she should join her loving spouse in Ireland; but every paragraph in this epistle was concluded with the outpourings of the uxorious husband's adoration, and "bless your dear eyes!" again and again repeated.

No matter if he described his theatrical prospects, or the view from his window, it was all with the same burthen — but let him speak for himself —

"Hold jones his a bit of a tierunt but the Sall is saf my Izabela Bles your deer eyes—i ham to av haf a ben on a good nite that will Make us boath cumfortable as i hope to hav yew sune in my harms bles your deer eyes — Dublin is a durty plaice on hacount of the bugs but the vew of the Witlow mountings is hansum and so do eomb and sea it—mind bring plenty of sixpensis for gards and coochmen as that is quite enuf for a fea from a ladey travuling A lone bles your deer eyes."

With the recollection of this affectionate epistle,

and the knowledge that the lady who played Laura Durable was the identical Isabella so tenderly addressed, I could not resist trying the effect this benediction would have on her, and, in the course of the performance, seating her on my knee, squeezing her hand, and looking her full in the face, I exclaimed in the most impassioned tone—

“ Bless your dear eyes !”

She started up, as though suddenly shot, for, since the letter I have alluded to had been sent her, she had deserted her tender partner, and how many “ dear eyes” she had blest by the light of her countenance I believe it would be difficult to determine. Sufficient that her charms had *pierced* the heart of more than one married man, to say nothing of bachelors.

The proceeds of our charity-play fell far short of our expectations, but still an acceptable sum was forwarded to the committee of noblemen and gentlemen who were using their best endeavours to ameliorate the distresses of our Hibernian fellow subjects.

It was my pleasing duty to escort to town two of the ladies who had performed with us, Mrs. Lazenby, and her sister, Mrs. Fawcett. They had constantly assisted at our Woolwich amateur doings, and I did not hesitate to mention to them

the idea I had formed of trying my fortune on the stage. Every thing that could be encouraging was said, and it was suggested that I should offer myself to Mr. Trotter, the manager at Worthing.

“ You will find one of the most charming theatres in the kingdom — small, but so admirably regulated—you would be quite at home,” said one of my fair companions.

“ Mr. Trotter,” added the other, “ is a man of fortune, of gentlemanly habits and manners, and I am sure would be delighted to have you in his company. Let me beg of you to write to him at once, as he is now making arrangements for his coming season.”

I had known the worthy manager for years, and promised the ladies to bear their kind suggestion in mind.

The day after my return to town I had the gratification of being made known to old “ George Colman the Younger,” and received the kindest acknowledgments for the trouble I had taken respecting his last production. The pleasure I derived in an hour’s converse with so delightful a person, more than compensated the pains I had taken to meet his wish.

I did not allow many hours to elapse before I wrote to Mr. Trotter, tendering my services to him, and requesting to be favoured with as many

particulars as possible, relative to the step I was about to take. A few days brought me the worthy manager's reply, which was most satisfactory and business-like, even to naming the middle of the coming month as the period when he should expect me at Worthing.

The Sunday following this decisive arrangement I dined at Ivy Cottage, and took an opportunity before the party assembled to acquaint Mathews of my plan. He assured me that he was heartily glad to hear of it, as he had not the slightest doubt but I should soon have reason to be gratified at the change in my pursuits; that a very little practice in the country was all I required to insure a speedy and lucrative engagement in London, and that I might always rely on his best influence with managers.

All this was extremely gratifying, and I hardly ever sat down to dinner in a more enviable state of spirits than on this day.

It was my good fortune to be placed next to Miss Kelly; I had never before met her in private life, though so long one of her most ardent admirers. I was much charmed by the brilliancy of her conversation, and the extent of her information, not only as connected with the art of which she was so distinguished an ornament, but on matters of general literature.

I remember the intense interest with which she listened to my narration of the attack on Sir John Purcell's house in Ireland—it having been my good fortune to hear the gallant old man relate the tale with great gusto, entering into the most minute details. These I would fain have softened, as too sanguinary for fair audience; but to my surprise, Miss Kelly eagerly demanded the truth, in Sir John's own words, which I therefore endeavoured to repeat. She listened with earnest attention, but, no sooner had I finished the story, than she sank back in her chair, and, but for the timely aid of Mrs. Mathews, who led her from the room, would have fainted.

The melo-dramatic enthusiast owed it to herself and her friends to have checked, instead of encouraging, my description; I certainly should not have given it, could I have foreseen its effects.

The retirement of the sisters was a signal for the other ladies of the party to leave us; and, as Mathews had promised to pass some hours with me at Woolwich, commencing from dinner time the next day, I embraced the opportunity of entering into conversation with one of the guests, whose appearance was highly prepossessing, Mr. Naysmith, the celebrated landscape-painter, and father to Mrs. Terry. The old gentleman's spoken pictures of the scenery in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh were

delightful, and made me more anxious than ever to behold Scott's "own romantic town."

Many anecdotes were told of Sir Walter, who at that time had not avowed himself as the author of the Waverley novels—any thing relative to the debateable question could not fail to be attractive. Terry fanatically idolized "the Wizard of the North," and took so little pains to conceal his bigot adoration, that he very often subjected himself to quizzical remarks from men less given to literary sympathies than was dear Dan himself. It was natural that he should pride in an intimacy which did honour to both parties.

I had promised Raymond that, no matter how late it might be before I quitted Highgate, I would give him a call in Chambers, as he "wished to communicate something of consequence." It was past eleven ere I reached the Inn of Court. I found my friend intently perusing a *small* volume, very unlike any of the Statutes at *large*; I soon learnt that it was Foote's farce of the Liar, from which he was studying the part of young Wilding; the important something he had to name to me was his earnest desire that I would be his Papillon at a private play, which was to precede a ball and supper at Mrs Burchall's, in Queen's Square, on the following Thursday. I gladly consented, feeling that the more practice I obtained the better I should be

able to undergo the ordeal of a professional appearance.

Raymond, pleased with my ready compliance, proposed our rehearsing the scenes at once; we were just about to commence—Act 1st, Scene 1st, when a loud knock at the door checked our proceedings. The midnight visitant was Yates; who, in the kindest manner, offered to act as prompter, and thus allow our intention to be carried, with an unexpected advantage, into effect.

When we arrived at the scene where master and man are discovered drinking, Yates quaintly observed—

“ But, George,—I say though — where are the properties? ”

Upon which good-natured hint we suspended operations, and sat down to our sandwich and wine with great zest; in fact, so pleasant did we find our present occupation, that we did not resume the language of Foote, but contented ourselves with recounting our own personal adventures, unconnected with “ Marble Hall ” or “ Abingdon, in the county of Berks.” It was long after day-break before the trio separated.

Spite of late hours, I got home to Woolwich in good time to make the necessary preparations for my friend Mathews’s visit.

My sister felt some aversion to meeting him. What her motives were *not* I can show at once.

On her telling some military ladies that they might meet Mathews if they called at our house on such a day, one of them had sneered—

“Oh, I can see *him* when I like, by *paying* for it.”

“On no *other* terms were strangers welcome to him,” retorted Bell, “and I was wrong to think of obtruding uncongenial company on so fastidious a genius.”

“If it had been Young, now!” drawled the lady.

“My brother has the honour of Mr. Young’s acquaintance, but *he*, we hear, will come down with such a bevy of his titled friends, that poor Artillery officers can’t expect a moment of *his* time.”

This suffices to indicate that my intended craft was considered respectable by my sister, who honoured Mathews as one among the practical champions of its respectability. She had heard of his domestic worth, extra-professional cleverness, of his brave and cheerful patience under great trials, his gentlemanly habits, kind conduct towards his fellow-labourers, and almost invariable display of respect for the public, who would fain have spoiled him. She *also* knew that he “hated pink-ribboned Misses, who talked of *talented* and *refreshing*.”

It was possible that he might mistake her for one such, and then she “knew how he would look.”

I could not remember that, on the occasions of my taking her to his Lyceum Monologues, he had ever looked alarmingly unamiable. I asked what she meant, and was reminded of a characteristic trait of “poor Mat,” which she had witnessed at Bristol, 1818. He gave his entertainment at our assembly room, which is in Prince’s Street, near the quays.

In the midst of one “*pet* bit,” a flat dray, loaded with iron-hooping, rattled along the cart road, rendering inaudible all Mathews was saying. He ran his fingers through his hair, shifted his leg, grew very red, smiled uneasily, and, as the noise ceased, muttered—

“Beg pardon, ladies and gentlemen! I was about to tell ye ——.”

The clattering machine lumbered on afresh still nearer. Mathews looked as if all his teeth were “on edge,” listened with spiteful eagerness, gulped at his glass of water; the cause of the interruption stopped; once more he essayed to speak—

“Though *I* am *not* ‘native here, and to the manner born,’ I *ought* to rejoice at *any* proof that the commerce of this ancient and loyal city flourishes, not only by *day*, but by *NIGHT*, and ——.”

The cruel dray rolled on again. Mathews, thoroughly "worried," would not attempt to continue till the object of his horror was fairly out of hearing; but by those nearest to him might be caught sundry snappings of the tongue against the roof of the mouth, and sounds like —

"Give it up! no use! beastly metallic noises! of course — I knew it — was sure of it — said so. Such things never happen to any body but me; can be but *one* motive. My Irish namesake's here, and I ——."

The laughter-blended applause subsiding, Mathews bowed, and, while his rat-eye dealt scornful fury round, said pointedly—

"Forgive *me*, ladies and gentlemen! it was impossible for me to proceed while forced to think with Hamlet, 'here's *metal* more attractive;' but now—we *have*, I trust, heard the last of *that* very witty triumphant car; till the NEXT arrives, which *I* expect every moment, I will, with your leave, *endeavour* to finish my story."

This fidgety tenacity of the respect he thought due to his (real or affected) morbidly sensitive peculiarities would only amuse a stranger, forming part of his audience. Yet, having as hostess to humour such an individual, was quite another thing.

Private persons of the highest rank may be

laughingly lectured by any young lady of independent mind ; but Mathews, though wishing to be treated in society as a mere gentleman, might think that no " Miss " would dare smile at his *fads*, if she did not know that he " got his bread by being funny on the stage."

To such fears I leave my sister for the present.

CHAPTER XVI.

GENERALSHIP—VERSUS KEAN—A KEMBLE PIPE—THE HOPE OF A RACE—ROSCIUS'S STRATAGEM—A LECTURE ON HEADS—A SLIP OF THE TONGUE—MATHEWS IN TRAGEDY—LIBERAL OPINIONS—NAPPING ON MY POST—LOST, LOST, LOST—FOUND, FOUND, FOUND—THE CAUSE—I DENY YOUR MAJOR—SPOILT CHILD—TEST OF GENTILITY.

I HAD very gladly included in my invitation Mr. Elder, a particular favourite at Highgate, and at six o'clock my expected guests arrived. I made them known to my sister. Doubts of whether or no she should get on at all with the great Mathews, had rendered her apparently indifferent to the event; she, therefore, by cool civility, put him partly at his ease, partly in a humour for striving to please, and draw out one of whom he had not *heard* as a merely inoffensive automaton.

He looked round on some Kemble portraits, which adorned our walls, and, rubbing his hands, commenced his attack—

“ All right ! I see ! loyal to *our* Royal family. There's her Imperial Majesty Queen Sarah ; and his Serene Highness Prince Charles ; and Stephen,

worthy peer ; and the glorious black Eagle — you know Bath well, do *you* remember poor Sowerby ?”

“ *I* do,” was my reply.

“ Ah ! then perhaps you *will* believe that *he* used to talk of things that happened to himself ‘ in the reign of King John,’ and make the matter-of-facts think him madder than he was.”

“ I’ve heard him say so often, and, of course, was aware whom he meant.”

“ Well—and *your* sister, as a poet, I’ll trust with a rare bit of fun I’ve brought down in my pocket, which it would be treason to read before beasts — Keanites ! ‘ Seen the clever Monkey ?’ ‘ Yes, extraordinary, astonishing, indeed !’ ‘ Go again ?’ ‘ No, thank ye, seen him *once*, that’s enough,’ eh ?”

“ *I* have seen Kean *more* than once,” said my sister, “ and hope to see him often — I can’t help admiring his genius in some parts.”

“ Yes, you *can* ! yes, you *do* ! don’t tell *me* ! you, if you *pretend* to be a Kemble-ite ? pooh !”

“ Nay, I don’t *pretend* at all about *that* ; but the Kembles were by nature too noble, too pure, too simple, to represent Richard, or Sir Giles, so well as Kean does.”

“ Come, ‘ that’s craftily qualified too.’ *I like* you. Yes, we may give the *leetle* man over all

the old and ugly rascals of the drama — Simple? What will you say to the feast I have here for ye? Very scarce—bought up—very old—burnt down—never mind, *I* 've got a copy! another Feast—and not at all unfair like Koranzo's — dear John Philip's early poems. Listen!"

Then, with an admirable imitation of our tragedian's voice and carriage, he read the little volume from the preface, beginning— "I am sure I do not know what I ought to say" (or something like it) to "Where's my pipe, my boy?" "Look to my Lambkins!" "Hence, ye impure!" (or "profane," or whatever it is, touching the death of Mr. Inchbald) "Thalia's was the deed."

My sister's unfeigned delight assured Mathews that he was appreciated; he called her "Good Audience." It pleased him to be *fine* on many subjects, for her edification; to mount sundry of his hobbies, to gold-beat and wire-draw several old prejudices, and new brief whims. If he chose to insist that a spade was *not* a spade, he could "turn its shapely sweetness every way;" fume his ingenious exaggerations in Italics, vapour his superlatives in Roman capitals, and fall out with the mirth his own original way of "proving" an assertion excited.

Conscious that it would be ridiculous in me to attempt any rivalry with the splendours of Ivy Cottage, I contented myself by placing before my

visitors a quiet, unaffected dinner, and as good wine as they could wish to drink. Mathews proposed an early adjournment to the drawing-room, where we all chatted our wittiest, winding up rather late, over a broiled bone and brandy toddy.

Our breakfast party the next morning received an accession in the person of dear Harry Betty, who had driven down from town; Hector, the Trojan, drawing a lighter and more open vehicle than "the Purple." He was warmly greeted by us, and congratulated his 'blessed Mathews on the prospect of witnessing genuine sport, without the chance of a *sell*.'

"None of your Newmarket tricks here, I suppose, my dear captain!" he continued; "all fair and above-board in a garrison race. No bribing of jockeys, nor bolting of courses."

Mathews suppress the retort that seemed rising to his lips, and put himself by for a hit. Roscius was intoxicated with vivacity—it seemed inevitable that he should do something outrageous, nor was that supposition long doubtful; leaving his breakfast unfinished, he placed on his head a basket, the open wickerwork of which was composed of rare Indian shells, drew its handle under his chin, and walked about before our door, asking the staring passers by—

"Did ye ever see any thing like that growing in a field of corn?"

Vast numbers of people had by this time assembled on the course; Mathews, observing this, turned to Barlow and Beard, who had joined our little coterie, and demanded—

“ Now, *can* any of ye tell *me* what all those fools yonder fancy they are going to see? For MY part I don't presume to know. I never did, nor shall be able to ascertain, nor guess, what earthly motive people, calling themselves *sane*, and passing with the world as sane, can have—for wasting their time or frying themselves to death, in the height of what *they* dub ‘ an English Summer,’ (three hot days and a thunder-storm!) For what? What *is* a horse-race? I never saw one! Did you? I'm serious! 'Tis all ‘ Here they come!’ and ‘ There they go!’ but, who? where? There never *was* a race won! 'Tis a mystery, all humbug! I attend every course I can, in hopes of making out why *others* do so; but I *can't*; no matter! May be Woolwich is doom'd to solve the problem. So Esperanza, Percy, and set on!”

Upon this we broke up the sitting. Betty ascended his vehicle, and I attended my friends on horseback. The drawing-room windows commanding a view of the course, my sister preferred remaining at home to occupying a seat in the Grand Stand.

The delays which constantly attend a start had

the effect of rendering Mathews fidgety—the first indication he gave of his nervous irritability was his turning to me with the remark—

“Some of the people must think me a wild beast—they stare at me so infernally. ’Tis very annoying!”

Mr. Elder, who appeared to have much power over the outpourings of his friend’s spirit, coolly replied—

“Then you are wrong to let it annoy you—as a public character you are public property—you would be much *more* annoyed if they did *not* pay your talent the homage which their recognition implies. Did not you set the people of the inn hunting the house over for a child?—supposed, who went about crying, ‘I want to be washed.’ *You*, who ‘don’t like to attract public attention, when you are not acting.’ *That* must be when you are in bed, and asleep!”

“Of course—as usual—I must be wrong, and every body else in the right; but I didn’t come here as a gaping-stock—I came to see a race—not that I believe I shall.”

Whilst I was using my best endeavours to insure my friends a place close to the Winning-post, I little dreamt that, my attention being engrossed, Betty would take advantage of the fact. He no sooner saw me fixed, than he drove back to my

door, ran into the house, and called my sister from the drawing-room, then saying—

“ Now, my dear Miss Hill, just step into the Tilbury. They’ll start ere you can get up stairs.”

He almost lifted her in, bare-headed as she was. A gesture apprized Mrs. Turner of his scheme — a bonnet was hastily brought down, forced on its owner, and, before she could utter one refusal, she was driven off in triumph.

My sister had some cause to dread two-wheeled vehicles. If, from a gig, standing stone-still, one may tumble to the “cureless ruin” of one’s profile, what might not be apprehended under such eccentric guidance as the present?

Well did Betty know that *I* should have objected to what he had, by stratagem, achieved. This consciousness only enhanced his charge’s peril. Did he see any one resembling, in his ideas, either Mathews or myself, he would turn “the Hector” in a contrary direction, and lash him into a dangerous speed. In vain the poor girl cried —

“ Be moderate! that whiskered dandy is not Benson.”

“ Perhaps not, my dear creature, but the thief doth fear *each* bushy officer!”

Presently they paused, to watch the race. A rustic pedestrian begged leave to raise himself,

stepping on the spokes of one of the Tilbury's wheels, and hanging on at the side. Harry gave him permission. The man strained eyes and ears, panting 'twixt hope and fear, till, when the running horses were in sight, he gasped forth—

“Gracious Providence! here they come!”

“God of Nature! didn't you expect 'em?” cried Betty.

Wiser men than our clodpole have unguardedly betrayed *surprise* at beholding the very things they “went out for to see.”

Fortunately for all parties, a torn flounce was the only ill effect of this kidnappery of Isabel.

The sports concluded; my friends, including Barow and Beard, returned to lunch. Mathews had regained his good-humour, and declared that he should ‘never forget what he had *seen*, for the first time in his life, that day, and most probably the last. The next miracle he should expect would be that of finding an angler who had really caught a fish.’

It happened that some military dropper-in, speaking of Liston, said—

“Oh, the *sight* of him is enough; he has but to appear, and his face plays the part.”

“I beg your pardon,” observed Mathews, “permit me, if you please, to disabuse you of that very common mistake—the same thing has been

said about *me*, on *that* extremely pleasant side of the question ; and of the Kembles, on the other hand. False, sir ! unjust to both, as I think I can prove. Not a face in the world, handsome or ugly, would be worth a straw, to any but the owner, if it did not possess variety of expression, *looks* which actors must owe to sense, feeling, hard study, practice. You may meet a hundred men, with *features* as anti-classical as Liston's or your humble servant's ; yet they don't make ye laugh, they are simply disagreeable.

“ Per contra, look at Mrs. ——'s, Captain D——, and Madame ——'s, Mr. H——, C——. Both of these gentlemen have profiles regular as statues could show you, and, no doubt, animation enough for private life ; but, were they professional actors, those fine traits would need education, ‘each instructed feature has its rule.’ Now, Joe Munden had a superb head, Roman nose, full lustrous dark eyes, rich mouth ; yet see his Sam Dabs ! Did Liston ever look more fit for the broadest low comedy ? Same rule holds good with Jack Edwin the first, and many others.

“ Again, there's Fanny Kelly ; does her face play the part ? does not its *expression* make one forget its *features* ? Believe me, I'm not prejudiced by brotherly partiality. In the case of John and Charles Kemble, if beauty were at once indis-

pensable, and all-sufficient, then their admirers would not prefer them to the well-looking men of figure who abound on the stage; and could not tolerate Macready or Jones, because their features are less perfect.

“It would be about as reasonable to assert that their ‘most sweet voices’ alone won applause for Braham and Incledon. As if they could have been famed as singers, without scientifically managing the gifts of nature. If I may be considered any judge, I give it as my opinion that Liston is an actor, or, as folks now say, an artist, who would have been just as popular as he is, if his visage had been fac-similized after Holman’s or Harry Johnson’s. Ay, and in Liston’s own line of business, too.”

This brief oration contained hints of great value, and future utility to me.

One of my visitants, previously known to Matthews, had too nearly fallen a victim to his love for a lady who could love nought save—(no matter what). The gentleman, announcing some kind office, by which he had saved Mat’s lame leg fatigue—the great man, forgetting all but gratitude and Shakspeare, thanked his young favourite, in a quotation I shall not repeat, but it accidentally bore on the most painful part of the amourette to which I have alluded.

Its hero fortunately did not perceive the allusion, and ran off again, as gaily as before. Poor Matthews! No sooner had the words escaped his lips, than he became pale and rigid as death. Nobody liked to speak—'till he burst forth, querulously, almost in tears,

“Great Heaven! *I* to HIM! I've heard of such things, and said ‘I don't know how the wretches do 'em.’ Some men might be excused, but *I* am not generally considered an idiot. 'Tis *my* trade to be *funny*. 'Twill be said next that I'd rather lose my friend than my jest. Call *that* a jest? *I* know better! can't tell what may happen to one's self—God pardon me! apologies would only make bad worse. *I must* let *him* fancy me a *brute*, a FIEND! that good dear lad. *I!*”

We assured him that his inadvertence had taken no effect on its theme. This roused him into petulance.

“Bless ye,” he cried, “you mean so well, don't know my feelings! nice man you are, good fellow, to yourself. Now what *is* the use of your telling *me*? Of course I know as well as you do, that it *might* not be heard, *might* not be understood, *might* not be felt. He *looks* deaf, a fool, a stoic, does he? Sir, he has such tact, such consideration for *me*, little as I seem to deserve it, that he'd *pretend* he did not care, and run off to grieve in secret.

But he *must* know that I could not *mean* to insult his sorrows."

While thus giving way to his scrupulous remorse, Mathews looked positively beautiful ! Our (all but) Werter's return, in tip-top spirits, convinced the luckless quoter that he had sinned with impunity. This restored his equanimity ; he even became boyishly frisky.

" I owe two sights to you, my dear Hill," he said ; " one, a real race ; the other, one good amateur actor. You are the only bearable specimen I ever saw, and I've, at least, *heard* of very many. Now, there's ———," (here he named the most distinguished commander of the Dramatic Gentlemen Volunteers), " he's a fine man, an elegant creature, speaks scholarly and wisely, an excellent character. Any husband or father might trust a female family under his wing, on a desolate island, in spite all the long stories and bad jokes got up by a pack of lying fools. All that's pointless, flat as the back of my hand. I *know* he's a moral, modest, safe lady's man, always was, 'tis his nature —After that, as for his acting, especially love scenes, I spit on such puny impotent attempts !"

I could not quite agree with either this praise, or this censure, but have since heard that, in *such* cases, Mathews made *himself* believe whatever *his* nature, averse to suspicion, *wished* to be the truth ; and,

per contra, if a man, even an amateur, played *his line of business*, he could be blind to a success which might have pained him, rather than give way to even a just degree of *jealousy*.

Again he said to my sister—

“ *I like you!* ”

She returned, rather pointedly —

“ ‘ Honours so great have all my toils o’er-paid ! ’ ”

“ There you go ! ” laughed Mathews ; “ no pleasing a Miss, she must quarrel with mere method ; don’t like my ‘ Epithec — Oh — I’ll come,’ as ‘ Charles Ingledon ’ used to say, when he tried to read his call for the music in Isabella — he could not master the Polly-syllables — know that story ? ”

“ I know it’s essence now — but, to the point, dear sir ! ”

“ Well, may one not mean by *like*, that one estimates and wishes well, and will be glad to see again, and all that ? ”

“ Certes, but may not I *detest* the word like, as much as *you* do certain other equally common and harmless phrases ? You are not like to gainsay that, so further pertness from me would be like any thing but the respectful.”

“ No liking lost, for all that, only I reserve the word *love* for the two creatures who belong to me, and with whom I never had an unkind moment.”

I wondered, just after our races, that he should forget Epsom — he resumed —

“Our boy wears one of Manima’s eyes as a brooch, I the other ; their pictures, I mean — not that we need ’em to keep our hearts with her, as her’s is with us — You don’t know *her* yet !”

This was true ; though, when the Mathewses had been present at one of our charity plays, my sister had bowed to her acquaintance, young Charles, in such a way as not to fix public attention on the party, but he pointed her out to the dear lady, and she impulsively *kissed her hand to Isabel*, with wreathed smiles ; which rather astonished the etiquette party with whom Bell sat — considering that not even cards had yet been exchanged between the fair matron of Ivy cottage, and the poor young maiden at Woolwich.

But it is quite possible for creatures of soul to appreciate each other, without ceremonious introduction. When report truly speaks of manners perfectly un-stagey, unaffected ; dress easy, rich, simple, and modest ; conduct above suspicion, such as befits one who, from a chaste girl, was converted into a faithful wife, and exemplary mother — I say when even a stranger hears of *such* a character, it must be with revering admiration.

Soon after five o’clock, Mathews, with Mr. Elder, departed for Kentish Town.

Betty was so well pleased with the first day's sport, that he determined on witnessing the second, and shared a late dinner with us. On our returning to the drawing-room, he inquired—

“Don't you go to the Ball, to-night, my Captain? I should have liked to foot it featly here and there, with the dark-cyed maids. In days of yore I was just the thing for dancing—so my honoured and convivial parent used to say; when I call her *so*, you'll understand I speak laconically, not about the honoured—but the poor dearblessed angel of a maternity is, in reality, dull and dignified, the queen of grief. But, may I not hope to lead a measure, to tickle the rushes—eh?”

I could not explain to my sensitive friend the prejudices of the Garrison, but truly told him, that, anticipating a day of fatigues, I had not secured tickets for the evening festivities. I was, indeed, so tired that, while the rest were taking their coffee, I fell asleep on the sofa. When I awoke, my first question was—

“Where's Betty?”

“He left the room half an hour since.”

“Not gone to town, surely?”

“No; he has ordered a bed at the Barrack tavern; no doubt he will be back to supper.”

But, as Richard of Hickleton fair says—

“Ten o'clock came, and na Betty, Eleven o'clock came, and na Betty.”

Going into my own room I found his beaver, and missed an old staff cocked-hat of mine. I sent Turner to the Inn. Hector and equipage were still there, but not their proprietor. We grew alarmed. I must not attempt to depict what we suffered. Messengers were despatched in all directions, still no tidings of the truant; between one and two I retired to bed, but not to rest, bidding Turner renew the search at sunrise, and bring me word of its results, be they what they might. From my first uneasy doze I was awakened by my man, who said—

“ Well, I’ve found Muster Betty.”

“ Alive ?” I hastily uttered.

“ Ay, sure, only dead asleep.”

“ But—where ?”

“ Whoy, in a cherry-tree, on Plumstead Common.”

“ Good God ! and now—”

“ Oh, now he’s asleep again. They’d let his bed-room at the Barrack tavern, as he didn’t come ; so he ran to the stable, threw himself down by his horse, calling the creature after all manner of woinces and places ; * and so, with his compliments, and

* I suspect that Betty’s words were “ Bucephalus ”—and “ White Surrey.” If the refined “ Lord Duke” calls Bucellas after Alexander’s horse, my soldier-servant may be excused for a similar mistake.

he'll be with you to breakfast, by ten, and went off like a babby — the runniest I ever see."

I heard a fluttered laugh from my anxious sister's apartment, and, understanding that our wild dear guest was safe, I enjoyed about four hours of refreshing slumber.

On taking my place at the breakfast table, still jaded and unadorned, I found the hero point device, fresh and sparkling as if nothing had happened, yet with affectionate remorse growing on him, as his young hostess described our suspense, and as much of our terrors as might be fit to meet the ear of their cause.

"I wonder I did not think of that, as Mac says," he cried, "when I reflect, be it ever so little, I am ashamed and sorry, sorry and ashamed; but hear me, for my cause! It was that friendly Ball that laid me low. Thence banished, I resolved in its bright radiance and collateral beams I would be comforted, not in its sphere; but, as a civilian, I fancied I might be turned back. So, seeing a looped hat upon a peg, in a cupboard of your chamber, captain — a dark corner of your cabinet, eh? I wore *your* beaver up — ay, up to where the as fair as noble ladies were descending from their cars to enter the lighted hall of banquet.

"Many a Juliana did I hand out. They took me for some great Naval commander doing Steward,

or Master of the Ceremonies. At last it was ‘All in, just going to begin,’ as dear old Richardson’s fellows say—and so I wandered down, to mark the *military* order of this city, *Woolwich*, which makes it beloved and honoured of all travellers.

“The night was neither chilly nor dark—through the doors and windows of very respectable hotels I saw lots of our brave defenders—who were not ball-going men. Some of ’em Majors, I believed *then*—my morning thoughts add *Drum* or *Sergeant* to that name, for they were any thing but proud.

“I asked if they knew you; not a soul but did applaud you to the echo. Surely no man can be more populous in the corps; and so they drank your health, and then my own; and some remembered me, and said such kind, such moving things! they must be disinterested *now*, you know, since I no longer live by fretting my hour.

“Well, I grew hot, and longed for something rural; and on I strayed till I came to an orchard, and there I found a bower, with meat and drink in it united, rosy ripe! which I enjoyed till sleep surprized me, and, when I awoke, I heard the voice of your doughty squire. The Turner, I must tell you, Captain, is a gem, a glory, a perfect treasure, a regular Kafips, but for whose rescue I should have been thoroughly kafouzled; he

was rowing the farmer for finding fault with my intrusion; but, I said, 'Here's money for my meat.' Pretty figure for the part of Imogen, even in boy's clothes, is the Lord of the Manor of Hopton Wafers,* now.

"Well, I came away—snoozed in clover with my gallant grey, or made that roan my throne, till the innocent usurper of my dormitory set off for London. Then I ablutionized, and here I am! guilty, indeed, but not impenitent; fitter to do another such a deed, than die for this!"

There was no being angry with the jovial, gentle Harry. I only sighed—

"A tolerably expensive trip you've made of it. Why, it must have cost you——"

"Spare your arithmetic! never count the terms! smile you but fair, and I am proof against their enmity."

By the time the Roseius had finished this account of himself, Beard, who had promised to breakfast with us, arrived, giving the following explanation of his absence—

A cockney equestrian, on a runaway steed, had knocked down a poor girl carrying an infant belonging to one of our corporals—the babe was killed on the spot—its young nurse looked on her-

* A large estate, formerly the property of my friend, W. H. W. B.

self as responsible to the parents for its life. Beard had to quiet her hysterics, break the truth to the mother, help her through a swoon, extract money from the unintentional destroyer, and raise a subscription for the funeral.

“As if,” almost sobbed poor Betty, “as if gold could do any good! Mr. Smith, you are not a father, nor you a mamma, my Belvidera, but here’s Turner—he has one fair daughter and no more, the which he loveth passing well, I dare say. Now tell me, Staggyrite, if, which the God’s forbid! she were ran over—what were the use of subscribing?”

“Whoy,” bluntly answered my man, “’twould save my woife from being bother’d about money matters at sich a toime as her feelins was hurt with consarns of loife and death.”

“Pooh, pooh! I tell you you’re quite — quite ——.”

Betty followed him from the room, shutting the door after them.

Shortly re-entering, he cried—

“Fly, my noble Doctor! The sports will begin directly—don’t lose them—I follow.”

I persuaded him, however, to stay with us. The adventures of the last night having gained for him a notoriety which I did not wish to share; to

this proposal he readily acceded, and in an hour or two after the final heat he set off for town.

The quiet Mrs. Turner took the earliest opportunity to inform her lady, that—

“Mr. Betty behaved very much like a gentleman, about the sad accident as killed the babby, ma’am.”

“Very much ! how much ?” demanded Isabel.

The woman named *golden* proofs of parental sympathy, sent by the deprecator of subscriptions, through Turner, to the corporal’s wife.

“But,” added she, “Mr. Betty made Peter,” (so this in other respects contrast to Fauleconbridge always called her *Samuel*), “promise that he would not mention the present to any body, ma’am — the dear gentleman talked quite awful, so of course *neither* of us have said a word about it to a living soul.”

The man had only told his wife — the wife only told her mistress, the mistress only told her brother, the brother is now only telling the public at large. Such is the fate of most secrets—but *this* betrayal, Harry, “Serves you right !”

CHAPTER XVII.

A FETE—PERSONATION—THE QUEER LITTLE MAN—COUNT HIM A NOBLE—A MORSEL FOR A MONARCH—NAE SILLER—THE KING OF HEARTS—TRUTH.

THE day following dear Betty's departure, was the one fixed for Mrs. Burchell's soirée. Those of her friends who were to assist at the private theatricals, which constituted a part of the evening's amusement, assembled in the morning for the purpose of rehearsal.

The folding doors of the back drawing-room having been removed, a tasteful proscenium, and all that was essential behind the curtain, had been admirably contrived and executed under the able directions of Mr. Beazely; who also furnished a very sparkling address, to be delivered previous to the performance, claiming the good feeling of the company towards the little squad of amateurs who were about to venture on the task of attempting to amuse them.

Young Wilding afforded my friend Raymond ample scope for indulging in his Ellistonian manner; not that I mean to imply he gave the part in direct imitation, but it was evident that he had studied the whimsicalities of his admired Drury Lane manager, and re-produced them elegantly blended with his own original humour.

The father of the "modern Mandeville" was ably supported, in Terry's style, by Mr. Charles Dance, a gentleman who has since then become well known to the play-going public by his very many clever burlettas and farces, some of these written conjointly with the versatile Mr. Planché and his talented lady.

The part of Sir James Elliott fell to the lot of the fair youth called, by Harry Betty, Billy Jenkins. An amateur player, so cast, is fortunate, if ignorant of the sneer attached, by regular actors, to this very insipid walking gentleman.

To be called "fit for the Sir James Elliotts," were death to a professional aspirant for the glories of light genteel comedy. *The Captain*, whose name must not be printed, said to me with pompous jocosity, one day—

"I have played in the *Liar*, *myself*."

"Ha!" I asked, "Wilding or Pampillon?"

"Neither. I was the person of rank and title in the piece. I performed *Sir James Elliott*."

This en passant, but to return —

Blue Devils followed the Liar, and imitation being the order of the night, I played the short character of a Bailiff, with Matthew Stuffy's "cold id my lose," and, as an extra disguise, went about with my eye out, at least with one lid closed.

If any azure demons were conjured up by this piece, I have little doubt that they were soon exorcised by the announcement of supper.

"Such a getting *down* stairs"—to parody the newest news—I have hardly ever witnessed, and never saw a more determined attack upon the "vivers" and wines. It matters not whether in Queen or Grosvenor Square, the moment refreshment rooms are opened, the same anxiety to get a good place at the table is apparent.

Determined to carry into execution my plan of trying my fortune on the stage, the applause and commendations I received this evening were doubly valuable.

In one of my summer visits to my friend Charles Mathews, at Ivy Cottage, though received with the same cheering smile, the same warm hospitality as I had experienced on former occasions, I could not fail to observe an anxiety on the part of my host to interrupt the sincere expression of my happiness in again meeting his amiable wife.

"Of course, yes; 'glad to see you,' 'sweet

place,' 'much improved,' 'your exquisite taste, my dear lady'—so every body says, and what every body says must be true; but we like you too well to expect compliments—besides, I want you to come with me into the gallery, I've something to show there that will delight you."

"A new Zoffany or a choice Harlow, I suppose?"

"Not a bit; what you are going to look on, is, in the language of the proprietor of the travelling theatre at Norwich, Bury, and thereabouts, 'None of your shadows upon blankets, but the living work of —' "

The sentence remained unfinished, his hand was on the handle of the gallery door—

"Now, my dear boy," he pursued, "prepare; for you shall see my long Pole, and if it does not 'stir you up,' may I never again be encoined in 'Bartle'my Fair'—I mean the song, not Smithfield."

He entered the room; not a living creature was visible; and Mathews looked searchingly about, never lifting his eyes above the surbase.

"I left him here when you rang the gate-bell; perhaps he's gone for a walk round the garden—roller, or has—'tis very annoying, so it is."

"D'ye mean Tiny?" asked I—(Mat had a little dog, so called); "Is it Tiny?"

“ Very ! ”

As he said this, his fingers were run through his hair with such rapidity as to convince those who knew his ways that he *was* annoyed ; but scarcely had he withdrawn his hand from deranging the economy of his curls, when from behind a table glided forth Count Boralowski, a tiny, indeed, who sent my memory back to the days when I was tiny myself.

In my first suit of dittos, covered with quadruple rows of sugar-loaf inconveniences, I was taken, as a reward for not having committed my usual share of mischief, to see the famous dwarf ; and I remember well, even at that tender age, being struck by the elegance of the small gentleman's deportment and unshow-like discourse, so different from the squeaking parrot-rote of Mr. Allen, then travelling with “ *Lady Morgan*,” both of whom I had seen at the last fair. These two very unpleasant pigmies were afterwards united ; I am not aware if her ladyship retained her rank, or resigned the title subsequently associated in our minds with a far higher order of celebrity. But I am wandering : the polish of the Polish Count delighted me. I was charmed with his interesting broken English, and in absolute raptures with his graceful manner of taking snuff ; it seemed strange to see so small a thing indulge in a habit then only practised by grown persons.

To confess how long ago it is since I first appeared “a forked thing,” would be to let the world into the secret of my age, a matter of importance to a man not yet too old to propose to an heiress, or, “for a consideration,” visit St. George’s, Hanover Square, with a widow. Enough that many years had rolled over my head; with a grateful recollection of the pleasure the little Count had afforded me, I had been delighted to hear that so exquisite a specimen of man in miniature as Boralowski was still able to gratify hundreds by his presence. And now once more we stood in the same room, though not exactly face to face.

Age had dealt kindly with him: a few deep wrinkles marked the lapse of time since last we met, and the hair, which I had first seen *en toupéc et en queue*, and well besprinkled with mareschal powder, was now silver gray, and streamed in thin tresses about his intelligent face; the eyes were bright and sparkling as ever, and he advanced to meet his host with a smile perfectly bewitching. I was presented in due form. With a bow that would have put any master of the ceremonies to the blush, the Count held out his pretty hand, saying—

“Saar, any bodey dat my ver dear Mistare Matoos call his friend must be mine. I am ver glad to have honour to know you.”

The presence of this extraordinary being brought back to my memory every action of his which I had witnessed at my first sight of him. I therefore presented my box, knowing that where snuff does not act as an absolute introduction, it is often a ratification of friendly feeling. *Ma tabatière* happened to be one of the Patagonian size. No sooner did I tender this offering from Brobdignag to Lilliput, than the Count burst into an immoderate fit of laughter, which for some minutes prevented his speaking : at length he managed to say—

“ Matoos, my dear Matoos, upon my vord, do look, I nevere saw sooch a ting in my life ! *Parbleu !* I tink I could put all my *bas de soie*, and two tree pair of satin *culottes* in him. Upon my vord, ha ! ha ! ha !”

His merriment did not prevent his accepting the proffered pinch, and producing his own small gold box in return.

After a while Mathews proposed to me a ramble round the beautiful grounds attached to the cottage ; as might be expected, the being we had left forming the subject of our discourse.

“ Isn’t he a sweet little fellow ? Now, I’m going to tell you what happened to us two, for I do think *you* are a likely person to feel an interest in my relation — I don’t mean the Count, Heaven bless his dear little body and big heart, I

wish I could claim kindred with such a perfect diamond Bible of a man ; no, I mean that I'm sure you'll be pleased at what I'm going to say, because I know you are a loyal subject, as all soldiers should be. So lend me your ear."

Scarcely had he uttered these words when he observed a large party making their way towards him, and, with a look of utter dismay, added—

" It's no use, I see that. The moment I fancy I can have an hour to myself, some incursion of Calmuc Tartars, Cossacks, Goths, Vandals, Fiends, sure to break in upon my quiet. Now who *are* these people who have invaded my premises ?"

Saying which, he walked towards the group. Various introductions I could perceive were made to my friend, and presently the whole party entered the Picture Gallery.

I did not see my host again till the dinner was served ; he was evidently suffering from the infliction he had endured in answering the questions of so numerous a party, principally ladies ; once or twice he expressed his wish that the whole squad had been sent to——any other place but Ivy Cottage.

" Nevare mind, my dear Matoos ; dey are all gone, and you shall not be teaze no more," said the good-hearted Count, as he clambered up to

take possession of the chair which had been prepared for him.

I observed also that small knives, forks, and spoons were laid for him—a proof of the considerate care of his hostess. Mathews soon recovered his equanimity, and the *parti carré* seemed disposed to make themselves and their companions happy. Count Joseph fed more like a fairy than a man, though obviously quite habituated to all the niceties of good breeding requisite at table. On challenging him to take wine, he said—

“ Ah, sare, vill you pardon my rudeness to refuse ? I nevere have drink vine, nor grog ponch, all de vile I stay in your countree. I do not require him, so I leave him alone. Vat shocking ting for me to make tipsy myself at dis time of my day, but I shall pledge you vid von glass vater, vid all my heart.”

With the dessert coffee was served for the temperate Boralowski, who appeared to relish it as much as we did our wine. With unaffected good humour he volunteered to sing a French *chanson*, accompanying himself on the guitar ; and it was with difficulty I could restrain my laughter when I saw Mathews screw him up, on the music-stool, till he conceived himself high enough for the performance. To see this extraordinary little figure, hugging an instrument nearly as large as himself,

turned round and round till he came to a level with the table, had a curious and ludicrous effect.

The Count's singing was pleasing, and his execution on the guitar brilliant; his hands, diminutive as they were, had a perfect command over the strings; and the whole affair was so unlike display as to be quite charming. At an early hour he retired to rest; Mathews reminding me that what had been said by some histrionic wag of Simmons, that he never lay *long* in bed, was more applicable in the present case.

“ Well, now, my dear fellow, we have no fear of being interrupted, and I *will* proceed to tell you what I meant you to hear this morning, but for those invaders. If I did not know thou wert good audience, I'd see thee hanged ere I'd tell thee my story. You must know that an intimacy for many years has existed between the Count and myself. While I was at Durham, where he resides, I pressed him to come and see me here. He told me that he had long wished to visit town, as he was anxious to obtain an audience of the King. I was rather startled at this avowal, but could not in decency ask for what purpose, until I had him where I might be of some use, so I only became more urgent in my invitation, and it was accepted.

“ Well, the darling atom arrived, and soon after

dinner commenced the subject which appeared so near his heart.

“ ‘ Matoos,’ said he.”

Here the inimitable imitator assumed the voice, manner, and look of his theme so perfectly, that he had no occasion for going on his knees, which he did so effectively as the Infant Richard, Molly Maybush, and other characters in his Entertainments. The illusion was complete without this resource. Our tall comedian appeared to dwarf the lower the higher his genius towered.

“ ‘ Cher Matoos,’ ” he went on, “ ‘ please to tell how I sal get admit to Carlton House, upon my vord, eh ?’ ”

“ ‘ What is your object, my dear Count ? tell me that, and I shall be better able to afford you information.’ ”

“ ‘ Objec is to present a copy of de Memoir of Count Joseph Boralowski to Majesté, I write myself ; big book in splendid bind, prepare to offer to de King. How can get to pay my devoir ? Vat is to be done to go to court, to levee, upon my vord ?’ ”

“ ‘ This was a pozer ; loving the little creature as I did, and feeling the utter impossibility of such a figure mingling in the crowd of a levee within, and spectators without, I was in a perfect agony at the difficulty which presented itself in pointing this out to

my small friend without offending him, for it is a remarkable trait in his character, arising, I suppose, from the force of habit, that he seems perfectly unconscious of the existence of any singularity attached to him in private life."

Here I thought that Mathews was judging the Count's feelings by his own, rather than asserting what he could prove. I had certainly detected many signs of a mood diametrically opposite to that now attributed to Boralowski, in the words of his which I have already recorded.

"However," resumed Mathews, "as the whole soul of the little body was bent on his project, I promised to write to Lord Conyngham on the subject.

"Ah! you good creature, upon my word; in Durham I tink you only funny Matoos, now I see you are kind Matoos, very kind and good to your Boralowski.'

"Must give you every word, albeit in my own praise. My object was to do away with the ridicule which must have attended a public presentation, and, in addressing his Lordship, I stated my feelings and the facts.

"The following day it brought a reply; it contained his Majesty's desire—command I should say—that *I* should call at Carlton House on Thursday: as no mention was made of the Count, I kept the communication a secret, fearing that, after all,

the object of his ambition might not be attained. I need scarcely say that I was delighted at the prospect of paying my personal and dutiful homage to the *King*, and that I was in an unusual state of excitement. However, I braced up my nerves, stepped into the carriage, and astonished honest Thomas by telling him to drive to Carlton House.

“ Well, I reached the palace, showed Lord Conyngham’s letter, and with as much courtesy as though I had been an Ambassador from some great power, I was led once more to the presence of Royalty. Never can I forget my reception, never will the grace, the dignity of the King be forgotten. The moment my name was announced, his Majesty came forward to meet me, made me one of *his* bows;—talk of the Apollo Belvidere,—nonsense! stuff!” “ Very much so!” I felt inclined to remark; for, duly as I admired the tall full figure of my King, and the grace of his condescending bow, I could not perceive why such proportions, such movements, should be brought into comparison with the charms of a small, slight, youthful form, fixed in an attitude thrown back, as if to view the slaughter it had just achieved. Mathews proceeded—

“ The King at once entered on the business which brought me thither, saying—

“ “ I have a great desire to see my old friend Count Boralowski; I remember him well when I

was young, and being much pleased with him. Will you, Mr. Mathews, bring him here to-morrow evening?" I bowed. 'And,' added the King, 'I seldom go into public, I have heard a vast deal of your new performances, am I asking too much, tell me if I am, in requesting you, if it does not bore you, to let me hear any part of your last entertainment you like best.'

"I bowed again lower than before, and, in a few words, expressed my sense of the honour conferred on me, and my readiness to obey a command so graciously conveyed. I took my leave, was again attended with all due ceremony to the carriage, and hastened home to tell the news. My wife was delighted, the Count was in ecstasies; he would have kissed me if his lips had been within three feet of mine, but he mounted on a chair, threw his arms round my wife's neck, and said—'Ah! Madame Matoos, you have got a good man for your osban, I must embrace you, as *he* will not let me, upon my word.'

"Long before the hour of starting for town, his Countship made his appearance in his best bib and tucker, with *the* book under his arm, in as gorgeous a covering of morocco and gold as I ever beheld.

"'Eh, bien Matoos! am I fit to pay respect to Majesté? is my dress enough good for court?'

“ ‘ Nothing can be better ; but let me carry your book till we get to the royal presence ; you will be fatigued with its weight.’ Heavy lightness, serious vanity as to its contents no doubt.

“ Well, I handed — I was going to say lifted — my charge into the carriage. As we set out I observed that the Count’s countenance lost its usual serene yet vivacious expression, and imagining that he felt awed at anticipating his interview with royalty, I dilated on the urbanity of the King, of which I had so often enjoyed personal experience ; but my companion soon enlightened me as to the cause of his agitation.

“ ‘ No, Matoos,’ he said ; ‘ I have stood before several vry crown heads, it ees not dat, it ees not because de troble of my unhappy contré make a me sheltaire here, dat I can forget I am gentleman. Some time ago, it ees true, I receive de viseets, an peopul give my valet shilling for open de door ; bot now I go to lay at de foot of your King de his-toire of my lctel life, I am in terrible frightfulness. If fine, large Angleish Majesté shall not belcef dat dere ees room enough for great deal of pride, and man of honour even in dis breast, if he offair me money, my Matoos, upon my vord, your friend will faint, expire, dead as wall-stone. Oh ! hope Majesté cannot tink to give no money to Count Boralowski.’

“ I said all I could to reconcile the dignified scrap to an occurrence so very probable, assured him that the King would do every thing with the best possible grace ; but in spite of my eloquence, little Joseph was determined on treating great George to a swoon, if even the tassel of a purse became visible.

“ We reached our destination, and were ushered into a large drawing-room, one of the attendants begging me to name what I required, as his Majesty had given directions that attention should be paid to my wishes. The King seemed anxious that I should make myself quite ‘ At Home,’ and I was delighted at the prospect of again seeing him so. In a very short time I finished my preliminary preparations *à la* English Opera House, arranged my wigs and properties, and found my ‘ soul in arms and eager for the fray.’

“ About nine o’clock, the King and his dinner party entered the room : the moment his Majesty saw Boralowski, he caught him in his arms, kissed his two cheeks, and then placing him on the chair next himself, said—‘ My dear little friend, it is just two-and-thirty years since you were in this room before.’

“ An inclination of the royal head I took for a signal to commence, and, as good fortune would have it, I was in capital cue—voice in good order

—no need of jujubes, and only two or three sips at my glass of water between my saying, ‘May it please your Majesty—and your noble guests.’ The King applauded me most manfully; the lords and ladies couldn’t do less. I found it worth while playing to such a capital audience, and did my best. My never-failing friend, Mrs. Mac Knight, appeared an especial favourite of the King’s, so was Daniel O’Rourke, your story, you know, and I left off, to use Parliamentary language, with ‘deafening cheers from both sides of the house.’

“Refreshments were handed to me, the King recommending to my notice some iced punch, made after a peculiar recipe. I took some, and found it delicious; but what was worth more to me than all the liquors or liquids in the world, was his Majesty’s thanks for the entertainment I had afforded him and his friends, such were his own words, think of that, Master Hill. Turning to Boralowski, the King said, ‘Count, do you remember ——, the page, who brought you to me on your first visit here?’

“ ‘Majesté, ver well, nice kind gentleman.’

“ ‘Poor fellow,’ said his Majesty, ‘he is confined to his room; you will oblige me by seeing him before you go. I will read your book, depend on’t; and, as a token of my regard, pray accept this!’ So saying, his Majesty drew from his pocket a

remarkably small, beautiful gold watch, with delicate Trinchinopoly chain, and minute seals. ‘ Good night, Count ; good night, Mr. Mathews ;’ and exit through door in flat the finest gentleman in Europe.

“ One of the ushers led us to the page’s room. My friend, the Count, was the happiest creature living ; he surveyed the bijou with streaming eyes, exclaiming, ‘ Majesté noble body ; my mind ees ease, he offer no money. Happy Boralowski to live in countreé with such prince.’ We found the object of our visit in bed, to which I learnt he had been confined for many weeks : the eyes of the sick man lighted up with a strong expression of delight as he saw the Count enter, and he rose to welcome his visiter.

“ ‘ Saar,’ said the Count, ‘ Majesté tell me to come ; I am happy to show my duty, but ver sorry to see you in bad bed.’

“ ‘ My dear little gentleman,’ said the invalid, ‘ I am very much obliged to you for taking the trouble. His Majesty told me that you were to be at the palace to-day, reminded me of old times, and when I said I should like to see you again, promised that I should.’

“ ‘ The King *told* you ?’ said I inquiringly.

“ ‘ Yes, sir,’ feebly articulated the sufferer. ‘ Heaven bless him, for the kindest and best master that ever breathed ; every day since my illness has

my gracious Sovereign sat by my bed-side for an hour, cheering my spirits, and ordering every thing I could fancy to be sent to me.'

"It was now *my* turn to shed tears, and how could I help it, at this rare and beautiful trait of human feeling in a man, the goodness of whose heart so many *beasts* are just now disputing; I won't attempt a word of praise, the deed speaks for itself. Again and again, I say, God bless the King! to which I am sure you will cry Amen!"

I did; so spoke Mathews about Boralowski, and that is the long and short of my story — of which I was reminded when I learnt that the little man had died at a great age. Over his last, but *not* long home, one might inscribe, as an appropriately brief epitaph—

"Wee Willie Grey, with his leathern wallet,
Peel a willow wand to be his boots and jacket;
Twice a lily-leaf will make him sark and cravat,
Feathers of a flea will busk up a' his bonnet;
Wee Willie Grey."

A friend assures me that the Count was represented to Majesté on one of these occasions; I had not connected Mathews's visit to the King (in Boralowski's company) with any professional display on the actor's part.

In taking leave, at least for some time, of *my great* theme, I owe my own intentions a few explanatory words.

Up to the date at which I am about to pause, I felt (regarding Mr. Mathews) as a young military man, who admired his talents, respected his character, was obliged to him as his occasional guest, still more so as his host ; but not bound to blindness, or dumbness, on the subject of his marked peculiarities. Those who live with us, whose habits and interests are our own, who familiarly enjoy with us the sweets of mutual love, who know and are served by our *best* qualities, those *more than friends should* make allowance for all our ways, and do inevitably grow accustomed to attributes that forcibly strike comparative strangers.

What partiality does not veil for the kindred beholder, may be deemed too sacred for public revelation. No doubt many individuals, portrayed by Mathews to the diversion of crowds, had wives and children insensible to the oddities which set audiences in a roar, when faithfully depicted in a theatre.

My intimate and correspondent, however, left a fame which can *afford* candid treatment. The speeches I have retraced of his accord with the spirit of the descriptions and letters given in his biography. He is now as thoroughly a matter of history as Wynne or Wilkinson, Macklin or Moody. No one can *justly* or *truly* accuse me of irreverence or falsehood, in my accounts of him. Every par-

ticular of our *subsequent* intercourse, personal and epistolary, I may some day publish, as the events *really* befel. Most of the all I knew of *him* did such honour to the name of Mathews, as cannot easily be taken away from it by man or woman; and I am not the likeliest person in the world to make any such attempt.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SUPERIOR OFFICERS—A FRACTURE—OLD AND NEW FRIENDS—
ANTIPHLOGISTIC—CANUS MAJOR—A DUCK OF A DOG—A COL-
LECTOR—CONTRIBUTIONS—LOSE MY BEARD—GOOD BY SUP-
PER—THE WEEPING ROCK—WIND-UP.

Soon after muster, on the 1st of July, I sent in my request to the Master-General for permission to be placed on the permanent half-pay of the regiment, which, as I had no doubt of its being granted, I should consider not as a retaining fee, but a reward for past services, and surely seventeen years, including my cadetship, devoted to military life, were not *overpaid* by the trifling sum of about £80 per annum.

My resignation being accepted, I called to take leave of Sir Alexander Dickson. Although during our interview not the slightest allusion was made, on his part, to the intended change in my pursuit, I felt myself so justified in adopting the course that, had the subject been broached, I should not have hesitated to enter at full upon my

prospects. That my fate was not a matter of indifference to Sir Alexander, I shall show, by extracting a portion of a letter, which I received a few days after my having paid him a farewell visit.

* * * * *

“ I beg to assure you that I shall bear ever in remembrance the zeal, activity, and good conduct you displayed on the Expedition against New Orleans, and also at the sieges on the frontiers of France, in 1815; during the whole of which service you were attached to my personal staff, and I shall ever feel grateful for the assistance you so readily afforded me on all occasions.

“ It is with much regret that I learn you are about to withdraw yourself from the Artillery profession, but I sincerely hope that your future pursuits may prove beneficial; and with best wishes for your health and happiness,

“ I remain, my dear Hill,

“ Your ever sincere friend,

“ A. DICKSON.”

I hope I may be pardoned for making known this very gratifying testimonial.

Our ever kind friends, Major and Mrs. Campbell, on learning that we were about to leave, invited my sister and self, once more to enjoy, their

cordial hospitality, and meet the lady's mother, our dear Mrs. Colonel Scott. I was as surprised as pleased to find, in our after-dinner conversation, that the excellent Major was in possession of my plans; I received from him an affectionate assurance of his wishes for my success, and the constancy of his regard.

We have often met since I left the corps; as often have I been charmed by his general worth—and by the certainty that his friendship for me was unaltered.

My resignation not having yet appeared in the Gazette, I was still expected to attend parades, &c. ; and I well remember, at the conclusion of a tedious field-day, which had lasted many hours, under a broiling sun, the delight I felt at the certainty that it was the last time I should be called on to suffer such an infliction.

Hearing that Warde was in town for a few days, on a visit to Mr. and the Honourable Mrs. Green, I availed myself of their kind invitation to meet the friend of my youth at dinner. He continued to give me the most satisfactory accounts of his career; and, on my telling him the resolution I had formed, augured results every way to my satisfaction — hoped we might soon belong to the same theatre—and, in short, was as warm and friendly as I could desire.

I beg that those in whose esteem I pride, will understand me as writing of James Prescott, according to the school-fellow and brother-officer cordiality I long cherished and *proved* for him. Whether or no that friendship is still possessed by Mr. Warde, the how, when, where, why of the case, I shall not obtrude on my readers.

Determined to enjoy as much as possible of the converse of Warde and Green, on theatrical affairs, I did not leave town till late ; taking my seat on the box of the Paris Mail, as St. Clement's bells chimed the hour of twelve.

In getting down, at the bottom of Shooter's Hill, my foot slipped, and brought my shin in contact with the iron tyer of the wheel so violently, as to scrape away a large portion of the skin ; this accident was very mal-apropos, as it confined me to my sofa for some days, preventing my visits to town, where I had numerous matters to execute, connected with my intended departure. I consoled myself, however, by studying a set of characters, from the list furnished me by my to-be manager, and the wound received the kindest attention from Beard, who, knowing how soon I should need ability for action, did all he could to hasten a cure.

It would have been very awkward to have found myself disabled for one profession, just as I had

given up another ; having laid down my arms, I the more required to stand well on my legs, and not be laughed at by some few of my old acquaintance, who, I heard, resolved to cut me, as a player. These were persons to whom I never was *obliged* for aught, save that *very* determination. They opined that I “ must, at least, take a stage name ;” but I would give them no such pretext for forgetting, not knowing, not seeing, or meeting me coolly. A false title would have made me appear ashamed of the step I had taken ; besides, my sister’s residing with me put such a thing out of the question. There was, however, a sincere uncompromising consistency in the prejudices of these officers, which was respectable, by comparison with the equivocation of *one* who had been our cherished guest.

He declared that he should “ ever feel proud in the society of a gentleman who owed *fame and fortune* to his own talents.”

Barlow, Smith, and Beard, laughed at this. The latter saying, in the absence of the hero, though he would as readily have said it to his face—

“ Ah, ha ! Master —, I see your drift, as the jackass said to the snow-storm. He is prepared to judge you, Hill, not by motives, but results. Mark his conditions, and the event, then say if this may be a brother !”

Even so it proved — while Smith and Barlow

remained true to the last. Beard has resided abroad for many years, but gladly should I see him again, though, at that time, how we squabbled ! Because he would not let me drink my wine, for fear of engendering inflammation ; while he, tempting, provoking demon ! smacked his lips over it, and egged on my sister to mock me with pity.

“ Capital beverage, Arrybello ! Poor Benson ! what he loses.”

At supper, too, he “ scrimped me o’ my eoggie,” allowing me no more brandy than sufficed to make a toast-and-water coloured tippie — himself preferring what he called the “ Unblushing Hypocrite,” which he apostrophized as “ Pale Spirit”—continuing—

“ Yes, the philosopher of Geneva I, and wondrous works have been written by such upon the creature comforts.”

“ True,” I coincided. “ At a book-stall lately I saw an old folio, labelled ‘ Gin and Prog.’ ”

“ Expound, expound, well-educated infant ! ”

“ Why, the lettering was too wide for the back of the volume ; so that the remaining syllables, in the ‘ Origin and Progress of’ — something, were folded over the sides, and lapped in invisibility.”

“ ’Twas well,” laughed Beard, “ for ‘ Gin and Prog’ is *good*.—’Twere idle to inquire either the beginning or the end in such case.”

One morning, while dressing the part affected, he said—

“ A damaged leg reminds me—you dog !—of a curious fact. Every body is aware of the extraordinary instinct possessed by the canine race, but I heard an instance the other day, which I think worthy of being repeated. Some time ago, as Major —— was on his way to the Dock-yard, accompanied by his pet poodle, a drunken butcher, driving his cart furiously, ran over poor Mufti, and broke his *leg* ; the Major, though dreadfully annoyed, instead of pursuing the offender, and thrashing him, for which *he* would have had to pay a good round sum—like a sensible and humane man, thought of his animal’s sufferings, and taking him in his arms, carried him into the nearest Doctor’s shop, where the limb was set, and properly bound up. The dog recovered—and was, as usual, following his master, when, far from the scene of his own accident, he saw—they saw—both Master and Mufti, a miserable cur, who some ruffians had been pelting with brick-bats, and had broken one of the poor beast’s forelegs.

“ Mufti ran up to the maimed and howling tyke ; and, whether he whispered in his ear or not, I can’t undertake to say, but the Major assures me that they both trotted off, poor trundle-tail on three legs only, and made their way to a chenist’s

shop, Mufti going in first, and intimating, as intelligibly as possible, that his companion required surgical assistance."

"Did he get it, my dear fellow?" I asked, with a look of incredulity.

"You shall hear; by this time the Major came up with his pitying poodle, and, delighted by such a trait, offered to pay the chemist for any trouble he might take in carrying into effect his pet's wishes, for the recovery of a patient introduced under such extraordinary circumstances."

"Well, Beard," said I, "and now you shall, if you please, hear 'a lectel anecdot' which was related to me as positive truth — but mind, I don't ask you to believe it! A dear friend of mine, residing in Canterbury, possessed a small water-spaniel, of extraordinary sagacity; and this lady having a female intimate at the barracks, often made master Carlo the medium of communication; he had been taught to carry a small basket to and from the somewhat distant correspondents.

"The military lady was an invalid, and her *civil* friend thought that a present of early vegetables might prove acceptable; accordingly, Carlo was despatched, basket in mouth, as usual. Some days after this the ladies met —

" 'I cannot thank you sufficiently, my kind Mrs. ———, for your very obliging present, which the dear dog brought me last week.'

“ ‘ Pray say nothing about it ; the peas were from our garden ; I hope they turned out well.’

“ ‘ Peas ! why, my dear Mrs. ———, they were the least part of the gift ; ’tis true the basket was filled with them, and your note at the top, but I allude to the fine couple of fresh young *ducks*, that your pretty Carlo carried.’

“ ‘ Ducks ! my darling ? You must be mistaken.’

“ ‘ Not at all. Ducks and green peas ; as nice a dish, at this season, as could be offered. I assure you my husband and myself enjoyed them vastly.’

“ In vain the mistress of Carlo declared that her present was solely a vegetable one, the other reiterating the arrival of the concomitant. On inquiry, and you may be sure a strict one was made, it was ascertained, that between the residences of the two friends a farm-house stood, and that a large pond belonging to it was open to the road, on which various web-footed gobblers were wont to float. Carlo had taken advantage of this tempting locality, and, ‘ all out of his own head,’ had killed a brace of tender quacks, and laid them, with the peas, at the feet of his mistress’s invalid friend.”

If my reader laughs half as heartily at this story as my doctor did, I shall be quite satisfied.

I wish I possessed now, of that brilliant com-

panion even the Pharmacopœia in the title-page of which he had written, impromptu—

“ ‘ Take Physic, Pomp ! ’ says our great Bard—
The case of *Pomp* is somewhat *hard* ! ”

Just as I was packing up my little library, a short text came to our knowledge, on which we preached long homilies of fun.

An Irish gentleman, who had never need leave his own green isle,—enthusiastically fond of literature, the drama, and the Fine Arts, had written to a friend in London, saying—

“ I want your assistance in the materials I am collecting to form a thoroughly illustrated copy of those charming specimens of our living poets, the Rejected Addresses ; the plates to be architectural, landscape, and portraits, the best going, of any sizes, so they are but authentic ; as to show that I am regardless of expense, I shall ultimately have the book reprinted, to match and to hold the largest engraving.

“ With great research I’ve procured all I require — except a few, which may be difficult and doubtful, the more interesting on that account—and these I beg you to obtain without delay, taking time to get them good and cheap, but giving yourself no trouble, as somewhere in London the genuine articles must exist—easily found, by going about in search of them. My best way of telling you what

I still lack, will be naming the principal ones I already have.

“ All the real authors, and both the pretended. .

“ Most of the Royal people named, and the military, from Congreve down to Boney.

“ Wyatt, Garrow, Cobbett, Wilberforce, Rowland Hill, Old Bedlam, and many others of the same sort.

“ Chiefly political, for instance, the Spanish battles, with the Kembles, Bradbury, and Elephant.

“ Also several rare old specimens of topographical sites, Day and Martin, including views in Arabia.

“ Thus you will-see, at a glance, how little I need to complete the undertaking ; but it shall not be finished until I have made it so ; and pictures of every place, person, thing, that can be got, bound in it.

“ Be economical, but don't spare liberality ; and give me the friendly use of your time, without sacrificing your leisure.”

'Twas plain that he took the poems for really Rejected Addresses. This was in itself a scream ; still more so each conjecture which arose as to what a jumble of Whig and Tory, Saint and Sinner, Palace and Purlicu, such a thing would form, if it could be achieved, and what the writer expected to see it.

What elegant places must he have supposed all of those mentioned in the volume, by his making sure that they had been engraved.

“ A whole guinea copy of Halfpenny hatch, proof before lettering ; — a sweet view of Vinegar Yard ; — tender twilight in Chick Lane ! ” laughed Beard. “ Fudge him a few drawings, Benson ; he can get them engraved in Ireland ; no doubt, he’d pay highly, and swallow a false Martlet Court. Send him Fancy sketches of all the playhouses, and all the white houses mentioned in Coleridge’s Address.”

“ Nay, I more agnize the Portraits.”

“ Wright, Richardson, and Mr. Spring—eh ? ”

“ Nor those alone, but martyr’d Higginbottom, Bumford, Cole, with Clutterbuck and ‘ Muggins’ name revered,’ and valiant Crunp ! euphonious titles ! ”

“ True ! I see them all. Crump’s is a fine head ! then there’s Justinian Stubbs, Esquire, with his two valets, first—just image the lettering ! ‘ Portrait of J. R. W. A. Dwyer, in his uniform as a private in the Blues.’ ”

“ Followed by his successor, and that personage’s son—Emanuel and Patrick Jennings, with profiles of the youth’s playgoing coterie ; — especially Mr. George Green, with palpitating hand, who so nobly restored the hero’s beaver ! ”

“Some,” added Isabel, “might be paired, a lady to face a gentleman, as thus—Levi the Jew and Laura Matilda—The Black Prince, Lady Elizabeth Mug—Ghost of Dr. Johnson and—who?”

“Brandy-faced Moll!” cried I.

“Then for animals,” pursued Beard; “If the Elephant—why not Rabbit and Pig? Oh, decidedly Pig! he must n’t leave out Pig! An anatomical plate or two on large blue flies were good—with drawings from models of the sticks most prevalent in the O. P. riot—nightcaps, male and female, in best odour at the period of the Burning,—Oh! and of the Guard’s pigtails.”

Thus idly we ran on at score. If the romantic illustrator had been at hand, to take our advice, and impositions, his collection would not have been perfect under fifty folios.

Seriously, though, if representations of only the real and important persons and places alluded to in that witty, ingenious work could be got together, they would constitute an extensive, interesting, and varied gallery.

Wearied with confinement, I made a bold push, and got to town; held council with Mr. Palmer, the celebrated theatrical tailor, relative to a wardrobe. This interesting, intelligent, sentimental humourist, and honest man, was so exceedingly well-mannered, that even the *Major* part of the army

could scarcely have produced any thing *much* his superior. Believe it who *list* !

I also entered into an arrangement with Mr. Truefit for a supply of wigs, should I require them.

Short time now intervened between me and the night fixed by Mr. Trotter for my appearance. I required every hour to myself, and wrote to the commanding officer of my battalion for leave ; this was flatly refused, and I began to dread some infernal let or hindrance to my well-matured plans: However, on the 16th, I obtained a fortnight's leave from the Adjutant-General, and had every reason to expect, that, before its expiration, I should see my name in the Gazette.

The skin continued painful, the bustle and excitement consequent on packing up did not tend to my cure. Two days were devoted to P. P. C. visits, whilst the indefatigable Turner was busily engaged in cording luggage, &c. The evening previous to my departure, my kind and attentive surgeon, after telling me that my fellow-citizen, Dr. Baynton, was the inventor of what he was about to apply, strapped up the limb ; a precaution now rendered absolutely necessary, as Mr. Trotter had decided that I should make my first appearance in Tangent ; and I well knew that the fetters I should be obliged to wear, in that character,

might so injure the peccant part as to throw me again on my back.

On the 19th of July my sister and self took our seats in the chaise that was to convey us to town, leaving behind, without one feeling of degradation, all chance of future MILITARY GLORY.

In London my hours were occupied in completing my varied arrangements. After an unusually busy day, Raymond, Graham, and Beazeley supped with me; and, in spite the regretted absence of Yates, by quaffing bumpers to my success, made my last night in town very jolly, till three in the morning.

Early in the day Turner brought up the heavy baggage from Woolwich, and volunteered staying to see it safely stowed on the coach at Charing Cross.

Here I had to part with my old servant. We had left many valuable proofs of our regard with him and his wife, to which I now added a substantial *douceur*; he pocketed it without examination, bade us good by, and, I thought, departed, till, just as the coach was driving off, we heard a blubbering roar. I looked out, and beheld Turner, gazing after the vehicle, with streaming eyes. Never but once before had I seen him shed tears. That was on the eve of our worst day at New Orleans, while I was making some directions as to

what he should do if I fell. Gaily and kindly as I spoke, he had then given way both to grief and anger ; and now again he wept ! — not so much because I had been a decent master, but, no doubt, at that moment, even to his rugged nature, rushed remembrances of privations and perils shared with me, in other days and in other scenes, mingled with the more pleasing recollections that to *my* house he had brought his bride, in my service become a father ; and now, after he and his had lived with us so many years, he must go back to his old duty as gunner, I forward to my new duties as actor.

I can't blush to say that the good fellow's bit of Emery-like pathos made my stock feel uncomfortably tight. I envied my sister who could cry without pain or shame.

I have since met my man, and " baby," grown a tall woman—we have fought our battles o'er again, with sundry hearty laughs at some of our lighter skirmishes.

We had left, perhaps lost, many polite and pleasant acquaintance, whose names have not been mentioned in the foregoing pages, but whom we shall never forget to wish well.

To avoid personality, in a work like this, was as impossible as to eschew egotism ; I have, however, taken no liberties which their themes cannot *afford*

to pardon. In many cases I might, with justice, have been less civil; but, so averse am I to indulging vindictive sentiments, that some *once* agreeable intimates, to whom I could now scarcely refer with temper, I have forborne from mentioning at all.

'Tis said the injured may forgive, the injuror rarely can; I know not this, but am aware that I have had chances for making enemies for more than the last two years, "which were not so before."

One has been the office of acting as mouth-piece to editorial decisions, some of which may have mortified the vanity of certain literary aspirants; yet, if prompt courtesy can soften unwelcome truth, I believe it will be allowed that I have honestly done my best to conciliate all parties.

I allude to my situation connected with the New Monthly Magazine, and its Editor, a gentleman whose acquaintance I had long enjoyed. He suggested my omitting his name, as my wittiest and Torrest fellow-guest at Ivy cottage; but I must now do justice to my literary chief, as one whose hospitable and urbane conduct makes my labours light, and every business interview a source of pleasure.

My book contains some papers which had previously appeared, but even they have been care-

fully revised, and enlarged; yet form a very inconsiderable portion of the whole, as common arithmetic could *prove*. I hope, therefore, as they were kindly lauded when originally printed, that I shall not be censured for their reproduction, in a narrative to which they really *belong*.

Again, I sincerely thank the reviewers who so favourably noticed my first attempt, and repeat that I have used all the means in my power to make this venture still worthier of an indulgent reception, and, if possible, more clear than the last, in its announcement of *facts*, apparently misunderstood by *one or two* "gentlemen of the press," who mentioned me as "a Lieutenant in a Marching Regiment, turned strolling player," or "a person who happened for some period of his life to belong to the Artillery." That corps is not usually classed with the common run of what are called "marching regiments." To such, a man may indeed "happen to belong," but for the Ordnance branch of the service, a preparatory education is required; one must "happen" to have been a Gentleman Cadet, ere one enters the Royal Artillery, to which I "happened to belong;" from my teens to my thirties. Nor did I then turn "*strolling* player;" never having been engaged but in the established theatres of respectable, and mostly fashionable towns. Not that my mind is quite so "flimsy" as

to underrate either marching Ensigns or travelling Thespians, so that they be but *honest*, or, at worst, incapable of *slandering* a man, merely because he may happen to differ from them in Politics, or because they have *previously cheated* or *attempted* to cheat him.

As one of “the poor and proud,” I can only hint that I have not written, as I used to act, *en amateur*; but as I fought more for pay than for praise — more from duty than from inclination — it is not *easy*, under such circumstances, to be “very entertaining;” but if my judges confess that I have proved it possible to be rather amusing than otherwise, my most ambitious dream will be fulfilled.

THE END.

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missed the pleasure of seeing his delineations of Irish, French, and American character, on the stage, no less than his present performances, in pen and ink. . . . Mr. Hill, having thus told his own story to the reader is, we are sure, on the very best terms with him; we cordially hope that they may be long and pleasantly acquainted!" —*Court Journal*.

"Mr. Hill is so lively a narrator, and his stories are so well told, and with so much point, that the budget here unfolded may be safely pronounced one of the most entertaining works of personal gossip and military life which have ever appeared. In fact we have seldom laughed more heartily with any author; a perusal of Mr. Hill's book is as good as seeing Mathews and Liston twenty times over, and higher praise we could not attempt to bestow." —*Edinburgh Evening Post*.

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"Mr. Benson Hill served on the continent and in America; was present at the siege of New Orleans; and has encountered many of the "moving accidents" to which a soldier is at all times liable. We have rarely if ever formed acquaintance with a more observant traveller, a more social companion, or a more agreeable and exciting story-teller; he describes every thing he sees in a racy and original manner — brings persons and things vividly before the reader, and leads him on at a quick march from anecdote to anecdote, and from event to event, with unwearying good humour: we are never tired of his pleasant tales; he gives to his actual experience all the interest of a romance; if his "battles and sieges" are but few, his "fortunes" are many, and we defy the coldest reader to avoid being deeply interested in them. There is not a dull page in the work — it aims at nothing deep, does not pretend to throw new light upon any matter, or, indeed, to add to the general stock of information, but as a book of "personal gossip," it is, we think, without an equal. Mr. Hill is not only a gentleman by station — it is apparent that all his habits and feelings are those of a gentleman." —*New Monthly Magazine*.

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thing seems to damp either his military ardour, or his affection for a ludicrous scene, or a sparkling bon-mot. What cares he for the dangers of a hot skirmish? According to the old song—

‘ A bottle and kind landlady
Cures all his pain.’

As the variety of the present Recollections constitutes their great charm, so it almost precludes the possibility of regular analysis. We shall content ourselves, therefore, with an acknowledgment of the pleasure we have derived from the work, and with giving an extract or two from its pages.”—*Naval and Military Gazette*.

“ We are indebted to Mr. Hill for this, we presume, first appearance in a literary character. These volumes are light and gossiping, and, like all autobiographical performances, dashed with a considerable degree of egotism, which cannot be avoided when a writer is always speaking in the personal pronoun, I. We do not mention this, however, as a blemish; on the contrary, it is the best way of story-telling, and gives effect to relations. The melange is an agreeable performance, and the book such as may well be taken up to pass the idle or listless hour.”—*Literary Gazette*.

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“ We have read every page of these most entertaining volumes, from first to last. Now, as we could not say the same by every book that is put into our hands, we hope the assertion will be taken, as it is meant, as a compliment to the merits of the work before us. We have not, for some time, read any light work, with which we have been so much pleased and amused, as by these Recollections. They are written with great life and spirit, nor is there the least falling off in any particular, throughout the whole course of the work. Its vivacity is maintained, unimpaired, to the last. The author, who must be one of the most cheerful, best-hearted fellows in the world, and moreover a very clever one, has a singularly happy talent, in imparting an interest to the most trifling occurrences. His success in this proceeds from an extremely felicitous style and manner of writing, *that* being distinguished by great good-humour, a cute and judicious discrimination, and a lively imagination. In short, we would not hesitate to place him in the very first rank of those warrior literati, who have, of late years, ‘astonished the natives’ by their dexterity in wielding the pen. In the midst of all the fun and frolic, however, which these volumes record, the reader will not fail to discover and appreciate the excellent and amiable feeling which occasionally transpires, even in some of their merriest pages. We like it exceedingly. Mr. Hill says, at the conclusion, that, if his present attempt to amuse be encouraged, he will devote his leisure to a second series of sketches from memory. Now, as we cannot doubt of his obtaining this encouragement, the sooner he sets to work the

better. He must not yet 'limber up,' but give us at least *one* other round of his intellectual battery. Indeed, if the volumes to come should prove as good as those he has already presented to us, we would not care though we had one for every discharge in a Royal Salute, which is, we think, somewhere about one-and-twenty."—*The Scotsman, or Edinburgh Political and Literary Journal*.

"We do not know that we have ever derived more pleasure from the perusal of any work than from that which is now before us. From the first page to the last we have followed our waggish author, through all his 'whims and oddities,' with unabated zest, notwithstanding the occasional admonitions of smart twitches from our aching sides. From the title of the work no one could anticipate so much drollery and genuine humour. We merely looked for the descriptions of battles, similar to those which military writers usually produce; but, though Mr. Hill has furnished some highly interesting details of the various actions in which he was personally engaged, we admire, much more, his felicitous portraiture of social life, and his graphic illustrations of character. Some of the latter we know are drawn to the life. As an antidote to *Ennui*, or Blue Devils, we unhesitatingly recommend these volumes, in preference to all the artificial stimulants known to the pharmacopœia. We select the following whimsical anecdote," &c.—*Sunday Times*.

"We write briefly, for we are on the wing; but it would be hard if we could not bestow a word, however hasty, upon the very delightful production of an old chum, and a companion of 'most excellent fancy.' The press of the present day, teeming in works of this class, has not produced a more agreeable or more faithful collection of sketches from the life, with some portion at least of which every military contemporary of the author will find himself familiar. To all classes the frank and pleasant tone, the easy style, and, as far as it be possible, the originality of the matter, will recommend these volumes, the reception of which will, we hope, induce the writer to continue the subject, as he has conditionally promised."—*United Service Journal*.

"Here are two very agreeable volumes, from the pen of Mr. Benson E. Hill, formerly a Lieutenant of Artillery. The greater part of the first volume is devoted to scenes and adventures in Ireland, Kent, and Portsmouth. These are mostly of a pacific character, full of amusing anecdotes, and sketches of strange description. The rest of the work is devoted to voyages to and from America and Brussels, with sketches of the campaigns of New Orleans, Waterloo, &c., &c. Mr. Hill appears to have been always inveterately addicted to theatricals; for, even when in the service, he was fond of getting up plays, and energetic in his patronage of deserving provincial managers. He is an intelligent and clever writer, and his work is one of the most entertaining productions we ever read; we heartily recommend it to our readers, and, as samples of its very amusing

contents, select the following curious anecdotes," &c — *Weekly Dispatch*

"The adventures of many gentlemen would be worth listening to if they had the happy knack of arranging their materials, which is possessed, in an eminent degree, by Mr B E Hill. There are some persons who excel their fellows in a *viva voce* narration, some can write a story, who would blunder sadly in telling it, others, like Cruikshank, can exhaust a page of letter-press with a stroke of the pencil. We understand that Mr Hill is so fortunate as to possess the whole of these accomplishments. We regret that he has not given us a taste of his quality, in the graphic delineation of any of the characters and scenes, the description of which has afforded us so much amusement. As a writer, he gives a proof of his skill by plunging *in medias res*, at the commencement of his work, instead of the customary dull prologue, concerning grandfathers, god fathers, *et hoc genus omne* '—*The Weekly Post*

